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A HOLISTIC STRATEGY? EXAMINING HOW ARMED DRONE STRIKES INTERACT WITH OTHER ELEMENTS OF NATIONAL POWER

by

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Armed drones, technically known as MQ-1B Predators and MQ-9 Reapers, have become a preferred tool in U.S. counterterrorism operations. The use of armed drones in counterterrorism strategy, however, has spurred worldwide debate over the morality, legality, accountability, and effectiveness of the campaigns. Despite the concerns and debates about the armed drone programs, the armed drone campaigns will likely not only continue but also expand in the future. The purpose of this thesis is to explain how the application of armed drone strikes in fragile states has interacted with other elements of national power to achieve the objectives defined in the United States' counterterrorism strategy. The research examines what the United States conducted in fragile states in terms of diplomatic, information, military—other than drone strikes—and economic instruments of national power to achieve the objectives outlined in the United States' national strategies. Using Yemen and Somalia as case studies, this thesis shows that armed drones do interact positively with other elements of national power, but the employment of all instruments falls short of meeting the U.S. objectives for the countries. Incidentally, the failures do not result from the use of armed drones but from a misuse in some of the other instruments of national power.

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A HOLISTIC STRATEGY? EXAMINING HOW ARMED DRONE STRIKES INTERACT WITH OTHER ELEMENTS OF NATIONAL POWER

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFRICOM	Africa Command
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
AQAP	Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula
ARPC	Alliance for Restoration of Peace and Counterterrorism
BBG	Broadcasting Board of Governors
CCF	Complex Crisis Fund
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIVCAS	civilian casualties
CMM	Conflict Management and Mitigation
CSCC	Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications
CSTK	Center for the Study of Targeted Killing
CT	Counterterrorism
DA	Development Assistance
DCHA	Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance
DIME	Diplomatic, Information, Military, and Economic
DIMEFIL	Diplomatic, Information, Military, Economic, Financial, Intelligence, and Law Enforcement
DOT	Digital Outreach Team
EMRA	Emergency, Migration, and Refugee Assistance
ESF	Economic Support Fund
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FFP	Food for Peace
FMF	Foreign Military Financing
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GCERF	Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund
GDP	gross domestic product
GEEL	Growth, Enterprise, Employment, and Livelihoods
GHCS	Global Health and Child Survival
ICU	Islamic Courts Union
IDA	International Disaster Assistance

IMET	International Military Education and Training
INCLE	International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement
ISIS	Islamic State in Iraq and Syria
ISR	intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance
JP	Joint Publication
JSOC	Joint Special Operations Command
MEPI	Middle East Partnership Initiative
MIDLIFE	Military, Intelligence, Diplomacy, Legal, Information, Financial, and Economic
MRA	Migration and Refugee Assistance
NADR	Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, De-mining, and Related Programs
NFSC	National Framework for Strategic Communication
NGO	non-governmental organization
NMS	National Military Strategy
NSCT	National Strategy for Counterterrorism
NSF	National Security Forces
NSS	National Security Strategy
OFDA	Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance
PKO	Peacekeeping Operations
PRM	Population, Refugees, and Migration
QDDR	Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review
QDR	Quadrennial Defense Review
RoYG	Republic of Yemen Government
SNA	Somali National Army
SOCCENT	Special Operations Command Central
TBIJ	The Bureau of Investigative Journalism
TCC	troop contributing countries
TFG	Transitional Federal Government
TI	Transition Initiative
VEO	violent extremist organization
VOA	Voice of America
YSOF	Yemeni Special Operations Forces

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I.   INTRODUCTION

A.   ARMED DRONES AS A WEAPON IN COUNTERTERRORISM

Acts of terrorism remain a threat for the United States and the world. When al-Qaeda (AQ) attacked the World Trade Center and Pentagon on September 11, 2001, General Atomics' newly armed drone was still in the testing and evaluating phase.[1] Called into service early, the first armed drone strike against a terrorist organization occurred on October 7, 2001, in Afghanistan, AQ's then safe haven.[2] Officially known as the MQ-1B Predator or MQ-9 Reaper—in this thesis referred to as "armed drones"—the U.S. armed drone inventory, as of 2015, had expanded to 150 Predators and 93 Reapers.[3] Today, these drones conduct sustained operations across Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, and Somalia with intermittent strikes in Libya and unconfirmed strikes in Mali and the Philippines.[4]

During George W. Bush's presidency, he oversaw 48 drone strikes in Pakistan and one in Yemen.[5] After two massive and costly ground campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq, decision makers changed their perceptions of the strategic environment and came to regard the use of drones more favorably. For instance, the majority of drone strikes in George W. Bush's presidency transpired during his last year: 36 of the 48 drone strikes occurred in 2008.[6] Coming into office in 2009, President Barack Obama fully embraced

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[1] Chris Woods, "The Story of America's Very First Drone Strike," *The Atlantic,* May 30, 2015, http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/05/america-first-drone-strike-afghanistan/394463/.

[2] Ibid.

[3] "MQ-1B Predator," U.S. Air Force Fact Sheets, last modified September 2015, http://www.af.mil/AboutUs/FactSheets/Display/tabid/224/Article/104469/mq-1b-predator.aspx; "MQ-9 Reaper," U.S. Air Force Fact Sheets, last modified September 2015, http://www.af.mil/AboutUs/FactSheets/Display/tabid/224/Article/104470/mq-9-reaper.aspx.

[4] Rosa Brooks, "Drones and Cognitive Dissonance," in *Drone Wars: Transforming Conflict, Law, and Policy*, ed. Peter L. Bergen and Daniel Rothenberg (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 242. Brooks mentions the unconfirmed reports of drone strikes occurring in Mali and the Philippines.

[5] Peter L. Bergen and Jennifer Rowland, "Decade of the Drone: Analyzing CIA Drone Attacks, Causalities, and Policy," in *Drone Wars: Transforming Conflict, Law, and Policy,* ed. Peter L. Bergen and Daniel Rothenberg (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 13.

[6] Ibid., 14.

the shift to using armed drones and Special Forces raids to fight terrorist organizations.[7] Journalist Jeffery Goldberg characterized the Obama presidency as an irony because Obama "relentlessly questioned the efficacy of force, but he has also become the most successful terrorist-hunter in the history of the presidency, one who will hand to his successor a set of tools an accomplished assassin would envy."[8] Under the Obama Administration, from January 20, 2009 to January 20, 2016, the Bureau of Investigative Journalism (TBIJ) reports that the United States conducted at least 373 drone strikes in Pakistan and 143 strikes in Yemen.[9]

The use of armed drones in counterterrorism strategy, however, has spurred worldwide debate over the morality, legality, accountability, and effectiveness of the campaigns. The sensitive nature of counterterrorism operations has made the U.S. government cautious about releasing information on the CIA and Department of Defense (DOD) run drone operations. For instance, on July 1, 2016, the White House, for the first time, announced official figures on collateral damage—in this thesis referred to as civilian casualties (CIVCAS)—and reported that, since 2009, CIVCAS from drone strikes fell in the range of 64–116 killed.[10] Despite the concerns and debate about the armed drone programs, the armed drone campaigns will likely not only continue but also expand in the future.

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[7] Jeffery Goldberg, "The Obama Doctrine," *The Atlantic*, April 2016, http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/04/the-obama-doctrine/471525/.

[8] Ibid.

[9] "CIA and U.S. Military Drone Strikes in Pakistan, from 2004 to Present," The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, accessed March 18, 2017, https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1NAfjFonM-Tn7fziqiv33HlGt09wgLZDSCP-BQaux51w/edit#gid=694046452; "US Drone Strikes in Yemen, 2002 to Present," The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, accessed March 18, 2017, https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1lb1hEYJ_omI8lSe33izwS2a2lbiygs0hTp2Al_Kz5KQ/edit#gid=323032473.

[10] Karen De Young and Greg Miller, "White House Releases Its Count Of Civilian Deaths In Counterterrorism Operations Under Obama," *Washington Post*, July 1, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/white-house-releases-its-count-of-civilian-deaths-in-counterterrorism-operations-under-obama/2016/07/01/3196aa1e-3fa2-11e6-80bc-d06711fd2125_story.html?tid=a_inl. Many critics doubt the accuracy of the White House's statistics, just as they doubted the reliably of CIA Director John Brennan's statement on June 2011 that drone strikes have resulted in zero CIVCAS. The drone literature commonly studies three sources that track drone strikes around the world: the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, The Long Wars Journal, and the Center for the Study of Targeted Killing. These sources use open-source outlets to compile their statistics on U.S. drone strikes around the world. These sources claim to give credence to the sources that report the smaller number of reported casualties; nonetheless, each of the sources' statistics challenges the White House's figures.

B.   MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION

From the first armed drone strike in 2001 until today, the platform has evolved to become the weapon of choice in counterterrorism. Nevertheless, the U.S. *National Strategy for Counterterrorism* acknowledges that success against terrorism will only come through the use of all elements of national power.[11] To achieve U.S. political objectives during counterterrorism operations, the United States' employment of armed drones represents only a subset of its military power. This thesis seeks to answer a central question: how has the application of armed drone strikes in weak or failed states interacted with other elements of national power to achieve the objectives outlined in the United States' counterterrorism strategy. To investigate this central question, the thesis examines drone strikes in Yemen and Somalia to determine the degree to which these operations contributed to other elements of U.S. counterterrorism strategy.

C.   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH QUESTION

Public opinion polls show U.S. public continues to have reservations or oppose the use of ground forces to combat terrorist organizations, leaving the employment of armed drones all the more enticing for political leaders.[12] Meanwhile, U.S. public approval of the application of armed drones in the targeted killing of terrorists overseas remains high.[13] Obama's proclivities toward using armed drones will seemingly influence future presidents. For instance, on January 22, 2017, two days after President Donald Trump's inauguration, drone strikes occurred in Yemen against al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP).[14] These strikes were likely holdovers from Obama's drone

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[11] White House, *National Strategy for Counterterrorism* (Washington, DC: White House, 2011), 7.

[12] "U.S. Military Action Against ISIS, Policy Toward Terrorism," Pew Research Center, last modified May 5, 2016, http://www.people-press.org/2016/05/05/4-u-s-military-action-against-isis-policy-toward-terrorism/. As recent as April 2016, Pew research polls showed the majority, 50%, of Americans polled opposed sending ground forces to fight the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), while only 46% favored ground intervention.

[13] Avery Plaw, Matthew S. Fricker, and Carlos R. Colon, *The Drone Debate: A Primer on the U.S. Use of Unmanned Aircraft Outside Conventional Battlefields* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), 228–229. Plaw examines a period from September 2011 to May 2015 and discovers American opinion on the usage of armed drones never fell below 53% and reached a pinnacle of 83% in 2012.

[14] Shuaib Almosawa and Rod Nordland, "Renewed Fighting and Drone Strikes in Yemen Kill About 75," *New York Times*, January 22, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/22/world/middleeast/ yemen-houthi-qaeda-mokha.html?_r=1.

operations, but by the new administration not ceasing all drone operations shows that the new administration accepts drone strikes as an acceptable practice.

The reality is the United States will likely continue to employ armed drones to kill terrorists. Bombing of Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) targets in Iraq and Syria via manned aircraft will one day face a reduction or end all together, but the employment of armed drones in Iraq and Syria will presumably go on because no U.S. president will want the label as the president responsible for the resurgence of ISIS. Currently, sustained drone campaigns exist in Yemen, Somalia, and Pakistan, and confirmed drone strikes have occurred in Libya.[15] Furthermore, in the future, the United States has the potential to expand armed drone operations as needed because of the various U.S. drone bases throughout the world.[16] Therefore, with the high probability of armed drone operations enduring in the future, the significance of the research question rests with the efficacy of the use of armed drones as part of U.S. strategy to contain, degrade, and defeat terrorist groups.

Arguments pervade the question of whether the application of armed drones in counterterrorism operations works. All literature, however, narrowly assesses the application of armed drones without considering the whole U.S. strategy in the often weak or failed states where armed drone campaigns occur. The published U.S. strategy to defeat terrorist organizations does not solely rest with the sustained use of armed drones. Therefore, the research in this thesis assesses the application of armed drones in relation to the entire U.S. counterterrorism strategy employed in the weak or failed state.

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[15] Greg Botelho and Barbara Starr, "49 Killed in U.S. Airstrike Targeting Terrorist in Libya," *CNN*, last modified February 20, 2016, http://www.cnn.com/2016/02/20/africa/libya-us-airstrike-isis/.

[16] Craig Whitlock, "Pentagon Set to Open Second Drone Base in Niger as It Expands Operations in Africa," *Washington Post*, September 1, 2014, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/pentagon-set-to-open-second-drone-base-in-niger-as-it-expands-operations-in-africa/2014/08/31/365489c4-2eb8-11e4-994d-202962a9150c_story.html. The United States has constructed a drone base in Niger to support counter-terrorism efforts in the region. It is important to note that the initially agreement with the Niger government only permitted unarmed use of drones to support counterterrorism efforts via intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance. Nonetheless, if security in West Africa deteriorates far enough, negotiations could be reached to start arming the drones being employed.

## D.	LITERATURE REVIEW

To understand the effectiveness in the employment of armed drones, literature reviewed for this thesis covered three main topics to comprehend how drones fit in overall strategy. The first topic in the literature review deals with counterterrorism and, specifically, the different approaches in defeating terrorism. Second, understanding where drones fall in the overall scheme requires a literature review on strategy. Finally, the literature review covers the current debate on drones without focusing on the moral, legal, and ethical discussions. Despite the importance of the moral, legal, and ethical debates, armed drone operations have occurred, are occurring, and will likely continue to occur in the future. Therefore, this thesis focuses on topics dealing with the usefulness of drone operations as part of a holistic strategy. For this reason, the literature review on drones examines the discussion concerning: effectiveness of targeted killing, CIVCAS, enemy recruitment, and perceptions.

### 1.	Counterterrorism: Definition and Approaches

To research counterterrorism operations, one must understand the definition of terrorism. According to the U.S. Joint Publication (JP) 3-26, *Counterterrorism*, terrorism involves the "unlawful use of violence or threat of violence, often motivated by religious, political, or other ideological beliefs, to instill fear and coerce governments or societies in pursuit of goals that are usually political."[17] Terrorism scholar Audrey Cronin concludes that no one definition describes terrorism, but terrorism shares five common themes: political in nature, non-state in character, does not follow international laws, seeks an audience, and intentionally targets noncombatants.[18] Terrorism scholar Andrew T. H. Tan, however, acknowledges that not all terrorism originates from non-state actors because governments exploit terrorism by either using terrorism or supporting terrorist organizations.[19] Seeing closer similarities to an insurgency, counterinsurgency expert

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[17] United States Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Counterterrorism* (Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2014), vii.

[18] Audrey K. Cronin, *How Terrorism Ends* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 7.

[19] Andrew T. H. Tan, *U.S. Strategy Against Global Terrorism: How It Evolved, Why It Failed, and Where It is Headed* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009), 135.

David Kilcullen argues that, to combat global terrorism, one should understand it as combating a global insurgency because global terrorism consists of a dispersed consortium of Islamist movements that use terrorism as their main tactic.[20]

Counterterrorism defines goals and methods to combat terrorists. Counterterrorist actions seek to neutralize the terrorists, organizations, and networks to prevent them from using violence to achieve their goals.[21] The U.S. government approaches counterterrorism in the ends-ways-means construct. U.S. counterterrorism operations intend to pursue the end-state of eliminating the terrorist's ability to conduct acts on the homeland or U.S. interests.[22] The way that counterterrorism operations meet the end-state consists of neutralizing leaders and important subordinates by killing or capturing them, denying terrorists support from their administrative and logistical bases, and dismantling their capabilities and centers.[23] The U.S. government recognizes that to meet the end-state, the means must apply the whole-of-government approach, leverage multinational capabilities, and influence the pertinent populations and operational environment.[24] Cronin concludes that terrorism could end in six different ways: decapitation, negotiation, success, failure, repression, or reorientation.[25] In a slight difference, terrorism scholars Seth Jones and Martin Libicki postulate that terrorism ends in five methods: policing, military force, splintering, politics, or victory.[26] Counterterrorism operations, therefore, take one or more of the various ways in combating terrorism, and some techniques have yielded successful results against terrorist organizations while other techniques have proven futile.

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[20] David Kilcullen, "Countering Global Insurgency," Small Wars Journal, November 30, 2004, see executive summary, https://www.smallwarsjournal.com/documents/kilcullen.pdf.

[21] United States Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Counterterrorism*, vii.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid., V-1.

[25] Cronin, *How Terrorism Ends*, 8.

[26] Seth G. Jones and Martin C. Libicki, *How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering al-Qaeda*, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2008), 10, http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG741-1.html.

One strand of argument in the literature proposes using ideology to combat terrorism. For instance, some literature suggests exploiting the rift between the idealistic expectations a potential recruit has of life under a terrorist organization to the harsh reality of actually being part of a terror group.[27] In battling core AQ, Cronin believes the West has failed to capitalize on mutual disgust of terrorist acts shared by the West and Muslim communities.[28] Therefore, Cronin contends that the West has missed opportunities to deprive AQ of popular support by not working with local populations to formulate mutual objectives and to enhance their estrangement from AQ.[29]

Other arguments suggest applying additional techniques to combat terrorism. For example, some literature describes skilled diplomacy with weak states as imperative and more reliable in combating terrorism.[30] Meanwhile, Jones and Libicki recommend a U.S. strategy centered on policing and intelligence, which would also support host nation militaries to combat terrorism.[31] In a broader approach, Kilcullen endorses a revamped and tailored strategy of counterinsurgency to contest global terrorism.[32] Somewhat similar to Kilcullen, the JP 3-26 repeatedly states a whole-of-government approach in counterterrorism.[33] Although the literature may differ on the root causes of terrorism and what to address first to combat terrorist organizations, the literature agrees that fighting against a terrorist group requires a holistic approach.

2.   The Right Design for U.S. Strategy

Counterterrorism requires a strategy. The JP 3-26, *Counterterrorism*, recognizes counterterrorism necessitates a whole-of government approach. From ancient to modern,

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[27] Mia Bloom, "Are There 'Root Causes' for Terrorist Support?" in *Terrorizing Ourselves: Why U.S. Counterterrorism Policy Is Failing and How to Fix It*, ed. Benjamin H. Friedman, Jim Harper, and Christopher A. Preble (Washington, DC: Cato Institute, 2010), 57.

[28] Cronin, *How Terrorism Ends*, 190.

[29] Ibid.

[30] David Litt and Mary Ann Peters, "Diplomacy: the First Weapon Against the Terrorists," in *Toward A Grand Strategy Against Terrorism*, ed. Christopher Harmon, Andrew N. Pratt, and Sebastian Gorka (New York: McGraw Hill, 2011), 168.

[31] Jones, *How Terrorist Groups End*, xvi.

[32] Kilcullen, "Countering Global Insurgency," 46.

[33] United States Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Counterterrorism*, V-1.

strategy literature is plentiful, but paucity exists in the modern literature that provides details on a whole-of-government strategy. Early literature gave military force a primary focus for strategy. For instance, the literature describes modern strategy starting with Carl Von Clausewitz, but even he focused on the military aspect. Clausewitz describes strategy as the use of battles to achieve the political purpose of war, which was an extension of politics; he describes that the strategist must first define the end-state for the war and then establish the steps to accomplish it.[34]

After WWI, literature began to accept a broader concept of strategy. For example, strategists developed the term grand strategy, which encompasses the military and non-military activities directed against an adversary.[35] Additionally, strategists believed grand strategy balanced means and ends and coordinated vital goals with limited resources.[36] Reflecting on the string of French loses during the 20th century, French general and strategy scholar Andre Beaufre precludes the word military from his definition of strategy because he recognizes other sources of force exist for a country. Beaufre defines strategy as the art of efficiently using force to support attaining the political end-state.[37] In a recent analysis, foreign policy expert Richard L. Kugler recognizes that strategy's multiple actions should not function in separation from one another but should operate in a highly interconnected manner.[38] Kugler believes that a strategy should provide a framework for policy and views grand strategy as a misnomer while regarding a goals-oriented strategy as the better term.[39] The literature agrees that strategy must form from a desired end-state.

Literature differs on the means, or instruments, available to reach the end-state. Beaufre determines that strategy must be total, employing political, economic,

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[34] Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 177.

[35] Hal Brands, *What Good Is Grand Strategy: Power and Purpose in American Statecraft From Harry S. Truman to George W. Bush* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 2.

[36] Brands, *What Good is Grand Strategy*, 2–3.

[37] Andre Beaufre, *An Introduction to Strategy* (New York: Fredrick A. Praeger Publishers, 1966), 22.

[38] Richard Kugler, *Policy Analysis in National Security Affairs: New Methods for a New Era* (Washington, DC: Library of Congress Publishing, 2006), 64.

[39] Kugler, *Policy Analysis*, 64.

diplomatic, and military fields, each intertwined for the total strategy.[40] Beaufre also acknowledges the importance of world public opinion of strategy.[41] Kugler states that, today, the United States employs three main instruments of power: political diplomacy, military, and economic.[42] In addition to hard power that the diplomatic, military, and economic instruments of power traditionally provide, political scientist Joseph Nye introduces soft power as an instrument.[43] Nye considers soft power includes acts such as public diplomacy, broadcasting, exchange programs, development assistance, and disaster relief.[44] He recognizes a need for a strategy that combines both hard and soft power.[45] Strategy scholar R. Craig Nation reports that the United States has accepted that national power consists of several corresponding origins, expressed through acronyms such as DIME (Diplomatic, Information, Military, and Economic), DIMEFIL (Diplomatic, Information, Military, Economic, Financial, Intelligence, and Law Enforcement), and MIDLIFE (Military, Intelligence, Diplomacy, Legal, Information, Financial, and Economic).[46]

Some literature acknowledges that not everyone believes in strategy. For instance, political scientist Richard K. Betts presents ten common critiques that view strategy as an illusion, but he counter-argues each critique in defense of strategy.[47] Regardless of the generally accepted notion that formulating and applying a strategy is a good, safe practice, Betts acknowledges that not all heads of state follow a grand strategy and some

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[40] Beaufre, *An Introduction to Strategy*, 13.

[41] Ibid., 30.

[42] Kugler, *Policy Analysis*, 87.

[43] Joseph Nye, "Soft Power," *Foreign Policy*, no. 80 (1990): 166, doi:10.2307/1148580.

[44] Joseph Nye, "Get Smart: Combining Hard and Soft Power," *Foreign Affairs* 88, no. 4 (2009): 162, http://www.jstor.org/stable/20699631.

[45] Ibid.

[46] R. Craig Nation, "National Power," in *U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Issues, Volume I: Theory of War and Strategy*, ed. J. Boone Bartholomees Jr. (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2008), 149.

[47] Richard K. Betts, *American Force: Dangers, Delusions, and Dilemmas in National Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 245, 332, 267–68.

policy makers disavow it.[48] Although strategy literature varies on the definition and elements of strategy, the literature shares a common theme that strategy should originate from a desired end-state and strategy should never fall subordinate to tactics.

3. Issues Surrounding the Use of Drones

The literature is replete with debate concerning the employment of armed drones, and a primary concern with the use of armed drones includes the value of targeted killings. Despite the drone campaign conducting targeted killing, the terrorist organizations have proven resilient yet adaptable. For instance, literature recognizes that AQ simply appoints new leaders after drone strikes kill the previous ones, causing many critics to question the usefulness in ultimately destroying AQ.[49] As foreign policy expert Rosa Brooks states, "killing al-Qaeda's #3 does not do much good when #4 stands ready to take his place (after all, as several political commentators have claimed, the United States has supposedly killed al-Qaeda's '#3 official' dozens of times)."[50]

Yet, other analysts regard drone strikes as effective in killing terrorist leaders and denying sanctuaries to terrorist groups. Proponents of drones believe that if drone strikes did not occur, the terrorist organizations would have greater freedom of movement to become a more effective terrorist organization.[51] Furthermore, supporters argue that

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[48] Betts, *American Force,* 245, 332, 267–68. Betts quotes Sandy Berger, National Security Advisor to Bill Clinton as saying "most 'grand strategies' were after-the-fact rationales developed to explain successful ad hoc decisions."

[49] Audrey K. Cronin, "Why Drones Fail," *Foreign Affairs* 92, no. 4 (2013): 44–54. http://www.jstor.org/stable/23526907; Jenna Jordan, "Attacking the Leader, Missing the Mark," *International Security* 38, no. 4 (2014): 8, doi: 10.1162/ISEC_a_00157.8; Michael Freeman, "A Theory of Terrorists Leadership (and Its Consequences for Leadership Targeting)," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, no. 26 (2014): 6,15, doi: 10.1080/09546553.2013.751912. Freeman views leadership targeting on al-Qaeda as ineffective because the group has decentralized to the point that one can classify it as more of a movement.

[50] Brooks, "Drones and Cognitive Dissonance," 237.

[51] Javier Jordan, "The Effectiveness of the Drone Campaign Against Al Qaeda Central: A Case Study," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 37, no.1 (2014): 25, doi: 10.1080/01402390.2013.850422.

targeted killing fast tracks the promotion of less qualified leaders, contributing to the overall degradation of AQ.[52]

Of all the issues surrounding drones, the debate on CIVCAS resulting from drone strikes receives the most attention. Advocates for the application of drones cite that the platform's precision firepower and smaller blast radius from its armaments make it the preferred weapon to reduce the probability of CIVCAS while ensuring the death of the enemy. CIA Director John Brennan compared drone operations to surgery that removes the cancer [al-Qaeda], while not disturbing the surrounding tissue [civilians].[53] Drone supporters advocate that, with the platform's real-time surveillance and smaller warhead, fewer civilians die than the alternatives such as Tomahawk cruise missiles, F-16s, or other conventional methods.[54] The overall appeal from drones in reducing CIVCAS lies with its proportionality.

Critics charge that supporters overstate the proportionality and precision of drones. Until recently, critics directed a significant portion of the criticism over the U.S. drone operations at the U.S. government for not releasing information on the program, including official tallies of CIVCAS.[55] When the White House released their statistics on CIVCAS from drone strikes, critics saw the release as a step in the right direction but still lacking desired details, such as how the government compiles the statistics and what defines a civilian casualty.[56] Critics posit that the U.S. government's method of counting only military-aged males in a strike zone as combatants contribute to the government's

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[52] Daniel L. Byman, "Why Drones Work: The Case For Washington's Weapon of Choice," *Foreign Affairs* 92, no. 4 (2013), https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/somalia/2013-06-11/why-drones-work. Byman quotes a message from Osama bin Laden in 2010 who complained about lesser skilled leaders who are prone to make mistakes filling in the ranks of freshly killed leaders.

[53] Sarah Holewinski, "Just Trust Us," in *Drone Wars: Transforming Conflict, Law, and Policy*, ed. Peter L. Bergen and Daniel Rothenberg (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 50.

[54] Byman, "Why Drones Work"; Plaw, *The Drone Debate*, 76.

[55] Michael Boyle, "The Costs and Consequences of Drone Warfare," *International Affairs* 89, no. 1 (2013): 5, doi: 10.1111/1468-2346.12002.

[56] Paul McLeary and Dan De Luce, "White House Drone Release is Big on Number, Short on Detail," *Foreign Policy*, July 1, 2016, http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/07/01/white-house-drone-release-is-big-on-numbers-short-on-detail/; Greg Miller, "Why White House Claims on Drone Casualties Remain in Doubt," *Washington Post*, July 1, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/why-the-white-house-claims-on-drone-casualties-remain-in-doubt/2016/07/01/7eb968e8-3c70-11e6-a66f-aa6c1883b6b1_story.html?hpid=hp_hp-top-table-main_usdrones-150pm%3Ahomepage%2Fstory&tid=a_inl.

low CIVCAS counts.[57] Moreover, foreign policy expert Sarah Holewinski believes the CIVCAS from drone strikes remains ambiguous because no in-depth studies on the civilian deaths and injuries from drones have occurred in the non-permissive regions of Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia, the areas where the strikes occur.[58] Both advocates and critics of the drone campaigns agree that transparency will give the program more legitimacy.

Targeted killing and CIVCAS lead to another debate the literature has concerning drones: perceptions. Perceptions can form two categories: recruitment and opinion. Critics believe drone strikes can contribute to terrorist groups' popularity by inspiring recruits to join and may even result in the organizations becoming more extreme.[59] Furthermore, critics claim drone strikes disgruntle the resident populace, who, in the long term, could seek reprisals.[60] Yemen scholar Gregory D. Johnsen attributes the drone campaign in Yemen, which started in 2009, as having increased AQAP numbers from the 200–300 members in 2009, to 8,212 believed to live in Yemen in August 2014.[61] A study on propaganda output of AQ concludes that drone strikes have not degraded AQ's ability to produce propaganda; however, the same study could not find a positive relationship between propaganda output and drone strikes, meaning more drone strikes did not necessarily increase propaganda output.[62]

Advocates downplay the role of drones in recruiting terrorists. After conducting interviews in the contested regions in Yemen where drone strikes occur, political scientist Christopher Swift found the link between drone strikes and terrorist recruitment

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[57] Jo Becker and Scott Shane, "Secret 'Kill List' Proves a Test of Obama's Principles and Will," *New York Times*, May 29, 2012, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/29/world/obamas-leadership-in-war-on-al-qaeda.html?_r=0.

[58] Holewinski, "Trust Us," 50.

[59] David Kilcullen and Andrew McDonald Exum, "Death From Above, Outrage Down Below," *New York Times*, May 16, 2009, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/17/opinion/17exum.html.

[60] Cronin, "Why Drones Fail."

[61] Gregory D. Johnsen, "Nothing Says 'Sorry Our Drones Hit Your Wedding Party' Like $800,000 and Some Guns," BuzzFeed, August 7, 2014, https://www.buzzfeed.com/gregorydjohnsen/wedding-party-drone-strike?utm_term=.shXG4AREP#.abxav1dp5.

[62] Megan Smith, and James Igoe Walsh, "Do Drone Strikes Degrade Al Qaeda? Evidence From Propaganda Output," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 25, no. 2 (2013): 324–25, doi: 10.1080/09546553.2012.664011.

"anecdotal at best."[63] Swift believes AQAP has swelled in membership because of the tribal dynamics in Yemen and economic incentives that AQAP offers.[64] Swift concludes that drone strikes do not help recruitment, but, at the same time, they do not stop it either.[65] Journalist Saba Imtiaz acknowledges that Pakistan, as a whole, opposes drones, with only 6% of the population supporting drone strikes.[66] Imtiaz, however, also points out that the majority of Pakistanis polled live far away from where the drone strikes occur, and the inhabitants in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) may have differing opinions.[67] After interviewing residents in the FATA, *The Economist*, in 2013, discovered strong proponents of drones due to the platform's exactness.[68] In addition, political parties and civil organizations from the FATA published the "Peshawar Declaration" in 2009, which favors drones as a counterterrorism strategy.[69] Advocates of drones share the belief that locals in the areas where drone strikes occur likely support drone strikes over other kinetic operations to combat terrorists or militants.

Nearly all the literature views the use of drones in and of itself as a flawed strategy. The literature questions whether the short-term tactical successes that drone strikes bring deprive the United States of its long-term goals, such as local and regional security and peace.[70] Even drone advocates like Swift recognizes that, in conjunction with drone strikes, the United States needs to support Yemeni efforts at settling tribal disputes, developing local forces, and building an inclusive government.[71] Overwhelmingly, prominent critics regard that the targeted killing conducted by drone

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[63] Christopher Swift, "The Boundaries of War?" in *Drone Wars: Transforming Conflict, Law, and Policy*, ed. Peter L. Bergen and Daniel Rothenberg (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 81.

[64] Ibid., 79.

[65] Ibid., 80–81.

[66] Saba Imtiaz, "What Do Pakistanis Really Think About Drones?" in *Drone Wars: Transforming Conflict, Law, and Policy*, ed. Peter L. Bergen and Daniel Rothenberg (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 89.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Plaw, *The Drone Debate*, 84.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Bergen, "Decade of Drones," 30.

[71] Swift, "The Boundaries of War?" 83-84.

strikes consists of a tactic substituting for a strategy.[72] They support alternate methods at combating terrorist organizations, such as improving the host nation government or reducing poverty.

E.   POTENTIAL EXPLANATIONS AND HYPOTHESES

This thesis seeks to explain how the use of armed drone strikes in weak or failed states have interacted with other elements of national power to achieve the objectives outlined in the United States' counterterrorism strategy. Any explanation has to explore two essential factors: one, has the use of armed drones interacted with other elements of national power, and, two, has the United States achieved its objectives through its counterterrorism strategy. Therefore, four explanations can provide possible causal mechanisms that determine how the application of armed drones in the pursuit of U.S. objectives have either succeeded or failed.

The first explanation centers on armed drone operations coinciding with an increase in other instruments of national power. Thus, in this explanation, armed drone strikes, in conjunction with other instruments of U.S. national power, account for successful counterterrorism operations in a country. A second explanation is that other instruments of national power aid armed drone operations but, as a grand strategy, has failed against terrorist organizations in the country. The third explanation finds that not only do armed drone strikes occur irrespective to the other instruments of national power but the United States also fails to achieve its objectives. This explanation suggests the U.S. government has no grand strategy for the weak or failed states where drone campaigns occur. The final explanation posits that drone strikes do not coordinate with a grand strategy for the weak or failed state; regardless, the sole use of armed drones has proven successful in accomplishing U.S. objectives. This explanation, if established, would challenge the vast amount of literature on counterterrorism operations.

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[72] Jordan, "Attacking the Leader, Missing the Mark," 10; Kilcullen, "Death from Above, Outrage Down Below"; Cronin, "Why Drones Fail"; Boyle, "The Costs and Consequences of Drone Warfare," 4, 14; Metin Gurcan, "Drone Warfare and Contemporary Strategy Making: Does the Tail Wag the Dog?" *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict* 6, no. 1 (2013): 157–58, doi: 10.1080/17467586.2013.859284.

F.   RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design determines the goals of terrorist organizations, as well as their methods of operation over a period of time. The methods of operations for the terrorist organization includes the size of the group, scope, capabilities, and activity; these make the dependent variable. Research compares the dependent variable to the independent variable—the amount of drone strikes. For instance, evaluating a two-year period when drone strikes occurred, the research measures the affect on the dependent variable, if any. The research also examines what the United States conducted in the weak or failed states in terms of the intervening variable: diplomatic, information, military—other than drone strikes, and economic instruments of national power. To determine if a comprehensive DIME strategy occurred during drone operations, one can compare the DIME efforts in the failed or weak states prior to drone operations occurring. If a marked increase in DIME occurred during drone operations than over the period when drone operations did not occur, one can conclude that armed drone operations likely functioned in a whole-of-government approach.

This thesis uses a case study method, evaluating the dependent, independent, and intervening variables in both Yemen and Somalia. Chapters III and IV will show that Yemen and Somalia represent both a weak and failed state, respectively, where sustained armed drone strikes have occurred, and AQAP and al-Shabaab represent two terrorist organizations that seek an emirate and have pledge allegiance to core AQ. The research precludes Iraq from 2003-2011 and Afghanistan as case studies due to the vast amount of U.S. military personnel on the ground in those countries and the various methods of military force applied against terrorist targets. Also, research does not cover Iraq and Syria from 2014 until present because of the manned aircraft employed in addition to armed drones used to target ISIS. Similarly, research excludes analysis of Pakistan as a case study because the drone strikes in the FATA region target the Taliban and the al-Haqqani Network, in addition to AQ elements.[73] Although the FATA region has received the most drone strikes of any country, the operation remains atypical because one can

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[73] Plaw, *The Drone Debate*, 45.

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make the conclusion that the strikes against the Taliban in the FATA aim to support the U.S. ground effort in Afghanistan.[74]

To evaluate the DIME approaches that the United States uses in Somalia and Yemen, this thesis employs an assortment of sources such as policy papers, scholarly journals, U.S. government documents, Congressional Research Service reports, reports from the Department of State (DOS), United States Agency for International Development (USAID) reports, and RAND assessments. Research assesses drone strike statistics using reliable open source reporting from TBIJ, and the Center for the Study of Targeted Killing (CSTK).

G.   THESIS OVERVIEW

Six chapters comprise this thesis. Succeeding the introduction chapter, Chapter II positions the use of armed drones within U.S. strategy by analyzing various official U.S. strategy documents. The material in Chapter III covers Yemen, the first case study. This chapter includes information on drone strikes, as well as data on the other instruments of national power the United States applied in the country. Chapter IV includes the second case study, Somalia. This chapter uses the same format and type of analysis from Chapter III. A comparative analysis comprises Chapter V. Finally, Chapter VI concludes the thesis and remarks on the relation of drone strikes to the dependent variable.

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[74] Jon Boone and Sune Rasmussen, "US Drone Strike in Pakistan Kills Taliban Leader Mullah Mansoor," *The Guardian*, May 22, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/may/21/us-airstrike-taliban-leader-mullah-akhtar-mansoor. This is evident as recent at the drone strike on May 22, 2016, in the FATA region that killed the Afghan Taliban leader Mullah Mansoor.

II. THE UNITED STATES' CLAIMED HOLISTIC APPROACH TO COUNTERTERRORISM

Drone strikes occur while the United States takes other actions to achieve its foreign policy. In Insurgency and Terrorism, Bard O'Neil defines strategy as "the systematic, integrated, and orchestrated use of various means (diplomatic, informational, economic, and military instruments of power) to achieve goals."[75] Following O'Neil's definition, drone strikes should occur within the context of a broader strategy. The purpose of this thesis is to explore how the application of armed drone strikes in weak or failed states have interacted with other elements of national power to achieve the objectives outlined in United States' counterterrorism (CT) strategy. Establishing what the United States says it intends to do on paper to combat terrorist organizations provides the framework for evaluating what the United States actually does on the ground in CT operations. For instance, studying solely U.S. drone strikes in countries, while keeping the evaluation devoid of other efforts intended to counter terrorist organizations, fails to identify the real strengths and weakness in a CT strategy. Therefore, this chapter establishes the U.S. goals in CT and identifies how the United States intends to apply its instruments of national power to achieve them.

This chapter starts the evaluation from the U.S. National Security Strategy (NSS). Released by the White House, the NSS directs how the United States will apply its elements of national power to achieve its aims. Analysis begins with Obama's NSS documents, published in 2010 and 2015, because the preponderance of armed drone strikes have occurred under his administration. The NSS delivers broad guidance for CT operations. In June 2011, the White House released the *National Strategy for Counterterrorism*; this document provides more comprehensive guidance for the United States in countering terrorist organizations and requires analysis to understand U.S. goals in CT. The *National Strategy for Counterterrorism* is part of the Obama Administration's

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[75] Bard E. O'Neil, *Insurgency and Terrorism: From Revolution to Apocalypse* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books Inc., 2005), 45.

larger 2010 NSS.[76] Figure 1 displays how this chapter will evaluate the strategy from the United States' four instruments of national power. First, for the diplomatic instrument, the chapter explores the strategy from the DOS. Next, the information instrument encompasses the White House's *National Framework for Strategic Communication.* Third, the military instrument includes the strategy from the DOD, and, finally, the economic instrument covers the strategy for CT from USAID.
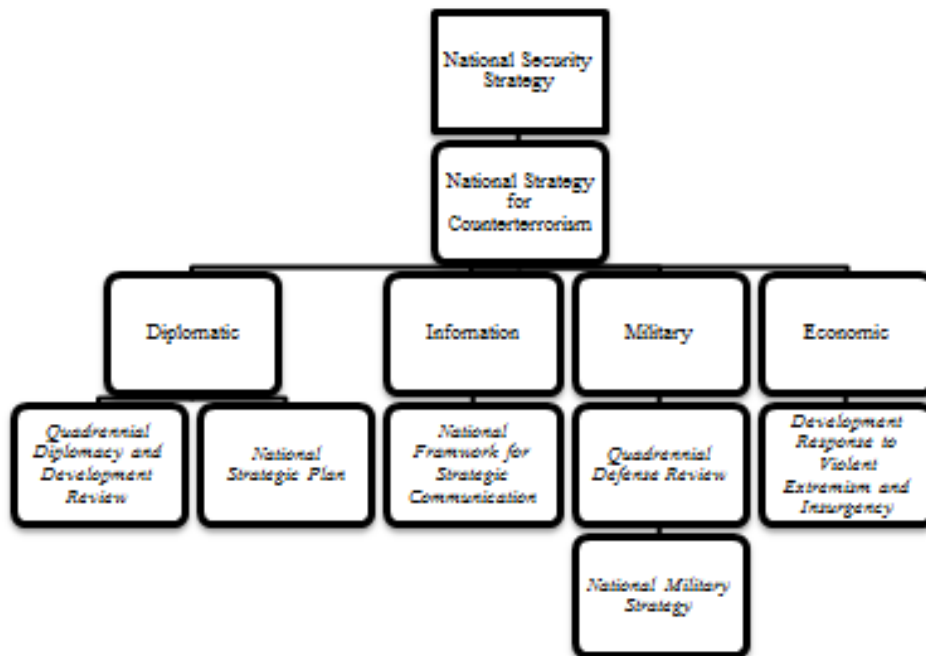
Figure 1. Strategic Guidance Breakdown.

A.   DIRECTION FROM THE TOP: THE NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY AND NATIONAL COUNTERTERRORISM STRATEGY

The Obama Administration published two NSS documents and both state goals regarding AQ. Juxtaposing the two documents, however, shows the United States' objectives for AQ has evolved.

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[76] "Fact Sheet: National Strategy for Counterterrorism," White House, last modified June 29, 2011, https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/06/29/fact-sheet-national-strategy-counterterrorism.

### 1.	2010 National Security Strategy

The 2010 NSS expresses the United States' end-state for AQ, which should drive all subsequent actions from the U.S. government. For example, the document states the goal of disrupting, dismantling, and defeating AQ and its affiliates.[77] Agreeing with the literature from many armed drone analysts, the 2010 NSS acknowledges that no one tool can defeat terrorist organizations. To demonstrate, the document recognizes that success against AQ "requires a broad, sustained, and integrated campaign that judiciously applies every tool of American power—both military and civilian—as well as the concerted efforts of like-minded states and multilateral institutions."[78] Therefore, the 2010 NSS clearly addresses the whole-of-government concept in CT operations.

The 2010 NSS establishes what became part of the Obama Administration's CT strategy; the United States will not only combat core AQ residing in Pakistan but also take the fight to AQ's affiliates. To illustrate, the 2010 NSS states "wherever al-Qa'ida or its terrorist affiliates attempt to establish a safe haven—as they have in Yemen, Somalia, the Maghreb, and the Sahel—we will meet them with growing pressure…we will also help states avoid becoming terrorist safe havens by helping them build their capacity for responsible governance and security through development and security sector assistance."[79] In contrast to the Bush Administration's 2006 NSS,[80] the language in the Obama Administration's 2010 NSS explicitly lists AQ affiliate safe havens and directly states that the United States will take action in those locations. Released in May 2010, the NSS provides the framework to the ongoing strategy during the year that experienced the most drone strikes outside of Iraq and Afghanistan. For 2010, TBIJ reports 128 U.S. drone strikes and CSTK notes 139 strikes occurred across Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia.[81] As of this writing, 2010 remains the year with the most strikes since armed drone operations began in 2002.

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[77] White House, *National Security Strategy 2010* (Washington, DC: White House, 2010).4.

[78] Ibid., 19.

[79] Ibid., 21.

[80] White House, *National Security Strategy 2006* (Washington, DC: White House, 2006).

[81] Plaw, *The Drone Debate*, 30.

## 2.	2015 National Security Strategy

The 2015 NSS recognizes that terrorism poses a persistent threat, but, as Figure 2 demonstrates, the document evolved from the 2010 NSS by stating a broader goal for combating AQ. For instance, the 2015 NSS simply states the goal of meeting the enduring threat from AQ and its affiliates without the "disrupt, degrade, defeat" language; yet it includes that language for ISIS.[82] The lack of detailed goals for AQ and its affiliates in the 2015 NSS suggests that the White House acknowledges what defense analysis expert Michael Freeman describes as AQ evolving from a coherent organization into a movement or ideology, as evident when the 2011 death of Osama Bin Laden had minimal effect on the group.[83] Therefore, the 2015 NSS contains a more sober goal of simply meeting the ongoing threat from AQ and its affiliates. Despite the lack of a detailed end-state for AQ, the 2015 NSS provides more specific guidance in addressing factors contributing to terrorist organizations. To demonstrate, the 2015 NSS acknowledges that terrorist threats thrive in areas of volatility, malfunctioning governance, and unfavorable circumstances.[84] Also, the 2015 NSS intimates at armed drone operations by stating the United States has shifted from major ground operations against terrorist organizations to "a more sustainable approach that prioritizes targeted CT operations, collective action with responsible partners, and increased efforts to prevent the growth of violent extremism and radicalization that drives increased threats."[85]

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[82] White House, *National Security Strategy 2015* (Washington, DC: White House, 2015), 7, 10.

[83] Freeman, "A Theory of Terrorist Leadership," 15.

[84] White House, *National Security Strategy 2015*, 9.

[85] Ibid.
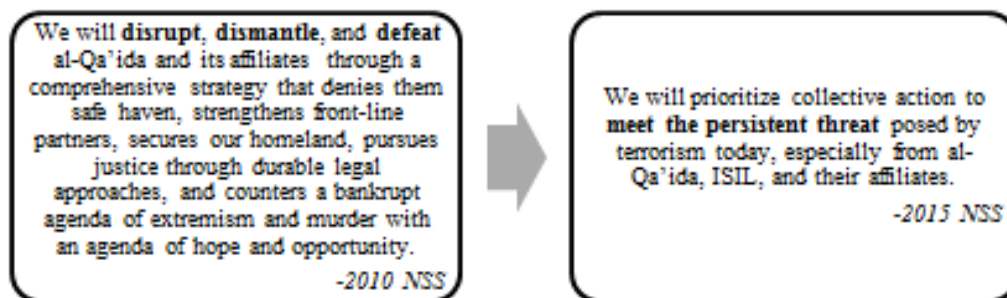
Figure 2. U.S. Goals against AQ and Its Affiliates.[86]

Although the 2010 NSS mentions the whole-of-government concept in the strategy against terrorist organizations, the 2015 NSS provides a more specifically holistic approach in defeating terrorist groups. The 2015 NSS notes the U.S. commitment to work with partners and multilateral organizations that focus on preventing conflict and to support weak states that attempt to establish a lawful government and provide for its populace.[87] For example, to tackle the fundamental conditions that promote terrorism, such as underdevelopment, injustice, and oppression, the 2015 document describes that the United States will support substitutions to radical propaganda, promote economic opportunities, and train and equip local partners to defeat terrorist organizations.[88] The 2010 NSS lacks the 2015 NSS's detailed language.

3.   United States' Counterterrorism Strategy

The *2011 National Strategy for Counterterrorism* (NSCT) expands upon the 2010 NSS and promotes a holistic government approach to combat the terrorist organizations that threaten the United States and provides Washington's goals against AQ. For example, the strategy re-establishes the U.S. end-state of disrupting, dismantling, and eventually defeating AQ and its affiliates.[89] To meet these goals, the document reiterates that U.S. CT requires a whole-of-government effort outside the customary military, law

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[86] Adapted from (left) White House, *National Security Strategy 2010*, 4; (right): White House, *National Security Strategy 2015*, 7.

[87] White House, *National Security Strategy 2015,* 10.

[88] Ibid., 9, 10.

[89] White House, *National Strategy for Counterterrorism*, 3.

enforcement, and intelligence competences.[90] The document provides more specific guidance by stating that the United States will use the military, civilian sector, U.S. values, diplomacy, development, strategic communications, and the private sector in its CT campaign.[91]

In providing guidance for eliminating AQ's safe havens, the 2011 NSCT emphasizes the military and diplomatic approaches. Specifically, the document states that the United States will "build the will and capacity of states whose weaknesses al-Qaeda exploits" and to break the "cycle of state failure."[92] By wanting to stop state failure, the document clearly provides a task for the DOS. The strategy also necessitates building lasting CT partnerships and capabilities with the goal of partners conducting CT operations independently, which will augment overall U.S. CT operations.[93] The method implies the U.S. military and law enforcement will work with and train local security.

The 2011 NSCT also recognizes that the United States must confront AQ in the realm of information. For instance, the strategy identifies countering AQ's ideology as indispensable in the U.S. CT strategy.[94] To achieve this, the NSCT states the strategy requires the United States to work with local and global partners to provide a "positive vision of engagement with foreign publics…that demonstrates that the United States aims to build while al-Qaeda would only destroy."[95] From the literature, both the critics and proponents of armed drones agree that a focus on terrorist groups' messaging remains a crucial component of CT, and the NSCT similarly views messaging as critical in countering AQ and its affiliates' ability to recruit and secure safe havens. The NSCT tasks government departments and agencies to prioritize messaging as part of their strategy in CT. For example, the document states AQ and its affiliates seek to exploit

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[90] White House, *National Strategy for Counterterrorism,* 3.

[91] Ibid., 2.

[92] Ibid., 9.

[93] Ibid., 9.

[94] Ibid., 3.

[95] Ibid., 10.

communication systems; therefore, the United States must undermine AQ in the domains of cyberspace and the media.[96]

B.   DIPLOMATIC

The DOS traditionally publishes a strategic plan for development and diplomacy, directing efforts for both the DOS and USAID. For instance, the Bush Administration, under Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, published the Strategic Plan for FY2007-2012, which was based on the Bush Administration's 2006 NSS. Under the Obama Administration, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton started the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR), published in 2010. Modeled after the DOD's Quadrennial Defense Review, Secretary Clinton sought for the QDDR to match the DOS's priorities with the budget and to provide guidance to the DOS and USAID in the same manner as the previous DOS Strategic Plans.[97]

1.   2010 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review

The 2010 QDDR set the tone for the Obama Administration's diplomatic efforts by communicating a break from the past. After two ground invasions into foreign countries under the previous administration, the 2010 QDDR intended to reestablish a civilian face of foreign policy. For instance, the document remarks that a personal goal of Secretary Clinton includes stressing the "need to elevate civilian power alongside military power as equal pillars of U.S. foreign policy."[98] Additionally, the 2010 QDDR reaffirms the Chief of Mission at each embassy supervises the efforts of all government agencies operating in their host nation;[99] this states nothing new but clearly delineates and reiterates the DOS's lead abroad.

The 2010 QDDR describes how the DOS will meet the NSS's goals against AQ. The document specifically affirms that the DOS has intensified efforts to disrupt,

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[96] White House, *National Strategy for Counterterrorism*, 17.

[97] United States Department of State, *2010 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review* (Washington, DC: Department of State, 2011), exec. summary, 1.

[98] Ibid., ii.

[99] Ibid., vi.

dismantle, and defeat AQ and its affiliates.[100] For example, the QDDR states the intention of establishing the Bureau of Counterterrorism to allow the DOS to expand its capabilities in CT.[101] Additionally, the 2010 QDDR announced the establishment of two organizations that would focus on and confront terrorist groups' activities. First, the QDDR publicized the founding of the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications (CSCC), which works to counter extremist messaging.[102] The CSCC would change to the Global Engagement Center in 2016.[103] The CSCC meets the *National Strategy for Counterterrorism's* intent of working to counter terrorist organizations' messaging. Second, the document reported that USAID established the Bureau of Policy, Planning, and Learning to lead policy formulation with a focus that includes counterinsurgency and CT.[104] The Bureau demonstrates that the DOS understands the need of diplomatic efforts in CT and implies that prior to establishing the Bureau, the DOS lacked a coherent approach to CT.

The 2010 QDDR recognizes that weak and failed states create safe havens for terrorist organizations and outlines methods that the DOS and USAID will use to address the issue. The document presents fragile states as a core civilian mission and provides a civilian mission statement: "prevent conflict, save lives, and build sustainable peace by resolving underlying grievances fairly and helping to build government institutions that can provide basic but effective security and justice systems."[105] Since drone strikes have exclusively occurred in weak or failed states, the mission statement offers the DOS clear guidance for their efforts in CT: address and work to alleviate the underlying issues in fragile states. Furthermore, the QDDR explains, by leading operations that respond to political and security crises, the DOS will apply the whole-of-government concept to assist host nations build effective security and justice sectors to prevent terrorist

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[100] Department of State, *2010 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review*, 10.

[101] Ibid., vii.

[102] Ibid., 62.

[103] Ibid.

[104] Ibid., 109.

[105] Ibid., xiii.

organizations from exploiting these weaknesses.[106] The QDDR implies the DOS's role in providing the synergy for CT operations because the document reiterates the ambassador's lead in the host nation.

2. 2015 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review

The DOS published the 2015 QDDR under Secretary of State John Kerry, and it addresses violent extremism as a top strategic priority for the DOS and USAID. The 2015 QDDR reports the DOS and USAID will focus on preventing and confronting the underlying factors for violent extremism.[107] Furthermore, the document describes that the DOS will work with other U.S. departments and agencies to implement a strategic framework for fragile states to better prevent internal conflict.[108] The QDDR repeatedly recognizes fragile states as the common denominator in allowing terrorist organizations to thrive and key to strengthening fragile states requires economic growth. Therefore, the 2015 QDDR stands out from the 2010 QDDR the most by stressing the importance of economic growth for the fragile states experiencing U.S. CT operations. The 2015 QDDR reports the DOS and USAID will promote economic growth that not merely increases a nation's gross domestic product (GDP) but also seeks to decrease unemployment and wealth inequality, increase services, and improve government accountability.[109]

The 2015 QDDR evolved from the 2010 version by stating no one-size-fits-all approach exists in CT operations. The document explains that the DOS will pay more attention to and address the drivers of violent extremism and conduct tailored approaches to the problem.[110] In taking a tailored approach, the QDDR seems to promote a more proactive vice reactive approach to CT. For instance, the document establishes a plan to

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[106] Department of State, *2010 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review*, xv.

[107] United States Department of State, *2015 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review* (Washington, DC: Department of State, 2015), 10.

[108] Ibid.,10.

[109] Ibid., 11.

[110] Ibid.

analyze and identify specific conditions that promote extremism and to review options for increasing support prior to extremist groups exploiting the situation.[111]

For the majority of the Obama Administration, the 2010 QDDR ostensibly guided efforts of the DOS and USAID because the DOS did not publish new guidance until the spring of 2014 via the Strategic Plan. The 2014 Strategic Plan focused on economic development efforts while minimally addressing the DOS's involvement in CT, far less than the 2010 QDDR devoted to establishing how the DOS will contribute to CT. The DOS published the 2014 Strategic Plan when the United States assumed it had AQ and its affiliates effectively contained. For example, the DOS promulgated the document a few months before violent extremist groups would make a resurgence around the world, such as ISIS taking over swaths of territory in Iraq, the Houthi starting the civil war in Yemen, and instability forcing the 2014 diplomatic evacuation from Libya. As a result of world events, the 2015 QDDR brings the DOS's and USAID's participation to CT to the forefront.

C.   INFORMATION

Even though the United States applies its information instrument throughout its departments and agencies, the White House provides specific direction on information in an attempt to synchronize efforts.

1.   2009 National Framework for Strategic Communication

The 2009 *National Framework for Strategic Communication* (NFSC) provides guidance to U.S. departments and agencies in applying information, including countering extremist messaging. The White House defines strategic communication as synchronizing "words and deeds…and programs and activities deliberately aimed at communicating and engaging with intended audiences."[112] The responsibility of strategic communication in a country rests with the Country Team, led by the chief of the U.S. diplomatic mission.[113]

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[111] Department of State, *2015 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review*, 26.

[112] White House, *National Framework for Strategic Communication* (Washington, DC: White House, 2010), 2.

[113] Ibid., 5.

Therefore, strategic communication against terrorist organizations in the countries where drone strikes occur ultimately rest with the U.S. ambassador, the head of the Country Team. In the NSS, the White House acknowledges the importance of extremist propaganda in the recruitment and support for AQ and affiliates. Consequently, the NFSC provides guidance in combating extremist propaganda. For instance, the document states CT efforts should "focus more directly on discrediting, denigrating, and delegitimizing al-Qa'ida and violent extremist ideology."[114] As a result, the NFSC emphasizes that information must support U.S. policy and strive to achieve a desired effect on audiences.

The NFSC delineates responsibilities for government agencies involved in information. Of note, three key organizations that can affect information in fragile states beset with terrorist organizations include the DOS, DOD, and Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG). The document states the DOS implements public diplomacy as a key element of foreign policy, which seeks to "promote national interests of the United States through understanding, engaging, informing and influencing foreign publics."[115] Also, the NFSC recognizes that the DOD contributes to the U.S. information efforts through information operations, defense support to public diplomacy, public affairs, and civil affairs.[116] One can argue that drone strikes constitute part of the information instrument in CT operations. An abundance of literature focuses on the psychological effect of armed drone strikes on not only terrorist members but also civilians. Although, armed drone strikes undeniably contribute to information, this thesis will categorize drone strikes under the military instrument because, ultimately, armed drones are a tool that causes death and destruction of its intended target. The NFSC includes the BBG as another information tool for the United States because it provides non-military international radio, television, and Internet broadcasting.[117] In examining CT strategy, analysis should cover the three key organizations that contribute to strategic communication.

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[114] White House, *National Framework for Strategic Communication*, 6.

[115] Ibid., 7.

[116] Ibid., 9.

[117] Ibid., 11.

To better address extremist messaging, in 2010, the White House amended the NFSC and announced the establishment of the CSCC. The CSCC's mission states to synchronize interagency public information activities intended for foreign audiences and aimed against terrorist organizations, particularly AQ and its affiliates.[118] The CSCC has the goal of applying communication tools to decrease radicalization, extremist violence, and terrorism that threaten U.S. interests.[119] Three core activities of the CSCC include combating AQ messaging through direct digital engagement, providing tools for U.S. communicators, and assisting Country Teams develop local level engagement plans.[120] The Center fulfills the NSS's and NSCT's intent on focusing efforts in countering extremist messaging. Also, the focus that the NFSC places on messaging meets what a lot of the counterterrorism literature stresses as key to undermining terrorist organizations— using ideology against the extremist groups.

D.   MILITARY

To meet the aims from the President's NSS, the Secretary of Defense promulgates his guidance and vision to the Department of Defense via the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). To apply the military instrument of power, the Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff publishes a *National Military Strategy* (NMS).

1.   2010 Quadrennial Defense Review

The DOD published two QDRs during the Obama Administration, and each nests with the President's initiatives. For example, the 2010 QDR clearly states defeating AQ and its allies as a priority and lists CT as one of six key missions for the DOD.[121] The 2010 QDR provides a focus for the DOD in CT operations that would shape the increased use of armed drones to combat terrorist organizations. For instance, the 2010 QDR stipulates the DOD will increase its capability to fight terrorist organizations by

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[118] White House, *Update to Congress on National Framework for Strategic Communication* (Washington, DC: White House, 2011), 6.

[119] Ibid.

[120] Ibid 7.

[121] United States Department of Defense, *2010 Quadrennial Defense Report* (Washington, DC: DOD, 2011), 17.

expanding the sustained orbits of armed drones. The 2010 QDR specifies, "in FY 2010, the Department made a commitment to grow to a capacity of 50 sustained orbits of Predator/Reaper by FY 2011. The Air Force is on track to achieve this goal and will continue to expand the force to 65 orbits by FY 2015."[122] Additionally, the document asserts the DOD will coordinate with other U.S. government agencies and work to strengthen civilian capacities in partner nations while U.S. military forces bolster the partner nation's ability to provide internal security, thereby denying terrorist organizations a safe haven.[123] Therefore, the QDR acknowledges the holistic government approach and frames the DOD's role in fragile states confronting terrorist organizations.

2. 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review

Under the Obama Administration, the DOD published the 2014 QDR, which develops on many concepts delineated in the 2010 QDR. For instance, the 2010 QDR saw the future of counterinsurgency campaigns existing of discreet numbers of U.S. forces while prioritizing host nation leadership, and the 2014 QDR expands on this concept.[124] The new emphasis on a specialized structure aligns with what then Deputy for Counterterrorism John Brennan stated in 2009: "we're not going to have the resources to do what we're doing in Afghanistan in Somalia and Yemen."[125] The 2014 QDR also recognizes that the United States will apply all of its instruments of national power in a holistic approach to counteract terrorist threats.[126] Subsequently, the 2014 QDR outlines the future role of the military in CT operations and alludes to drone strikes, reconfirming what many consider the Obama Administration's approach to CT since 2009. To illustrate, the 2014 QDR states, the DOD "will rebalance our counterterrorism efforts toward greater emphasis on building partnership capacity, especially in fragile states, while retaining robust capability for direct action, including intelligence, persistent

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[122] Department of Defense, *2010 Quadrennial Defense Report*, 22

[123] Ibid., 27.

[124] Ibid., 28.

[125] Bob Woodward, *Obama's Wars* (New York: Simon &Schuster, 2010), 227–228.

[126] United States Department of Defense, *2014 Quadrennial Defense Report* (Washington, DC: DOD, 2014), 28.

surveillance, precision strike, and Special Operations Forces."[127] The language of "rebalance" and "greater emphasis" implies that the DOD may not have focused on building partner nation capacity in CT operations prior to 2014.

3.   2015 National Military Strategy

As drone strikes developed into a drone campaign, the Joint Chief of Staff published two NMSs during the Obama Administration. Both the 2011 and 2015 NMS acknowledges the need to counter violent extremist organizations (VEOs) that challenge regional security.[128] The 2015 NMS, however, provides more detailed guidance on the ways to counter VEOs than the 2011 NMS contained. For instance, one of three national military objectives in the 2015 NMS includes the ability to disrupt, degrade, and defeat VEOs, although the 2015 *National Security Strategy* lacked this language.[129] The NMS details specific tasks associated with the disrupt, degrade, and defeat goals. The NMS aims to "disrupt VEO planning and operations, degrade support structures, remove leadership, interdict finances, impede the flow of foreign fighters, counter malign influences, liberate captured territory, and ultimately defeat them."[130]

The NMS also acknowledges its part in a holistic government approach in CT. To achieve its CT objectives, the NMS accepts the military's limited role by asserting CT necessitates all elements of national power, close cooperation of partner nations, and inevitably entails delivering safety and an economic future to vulnerable people.[131] To meet the aims, the NMS affirms the use of armed drones against terrorist organizations and the U.S. military's role in the whole-of-government concept. The NMS states the best way to combat VEOs requires local forces supported by U.S. military strengths that include precision strike capabilities; intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR);

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[127] Department of Defense, *2014 Quadrennial Defense Report*, vii

[128] United States Joint Chiefs of Staff, *2015 National Military Strategy* (Washington, DC: Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2015), 1.

[129] Ibid., 5.

[130] Ibid., 8.

[131] Ibid.

sustainment; and training.[132] Both the QDR and NMS outline a military strategy that focuses on small units of special operations forces working with the host nation security elements while the United States employs precision strikes against terrorist groups.

E.   ECONOMIC

Similar to the information instrument, various departments and agencies can represent the economic instrument. The United States, however, primarily provides it foreign aid and development programs through USAID.

1.   2011 Development Response to Violent Extremism and Insurgency

For the economic instrument of power, USAID provides a strategy against terrorist organizations. USAID serves the diplomatic instrument of power but also best represents the economic instrument via the developmental projects that USAID conducts. USAID establishes its strategy for CT through the *2011 Development Response to Violent Extremism and Insurgency*. The document provides USAID with direction by defining key concepts, providing engagement conditions and program principles, and identifying institutional improvements to support the development task.[133] USAID discloses how it determines projects to undertake in the U.S. CT effort. For instance, USAID categorizes the drivers for the establishment and recruitment of terrorist organizations and insurgencies as either one or both of two factors. First, USAID identifies that "push" factors include socioeconomic, political, and cultural matters, such as poor governance, repression, corruption, and social marginalization.[134] Second, USAID identifies "pull" factors as personal incentives for membership in a terrorist group or movement; incentives can include access to material resources, sense of belonging to a group, or social recognition.[135] To better apply development assistance, USAID ensures their projects can address one or both of the push/pull factors. In determining developmental

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[132] Joint Chiefs of Staff, *2015 National Military Strategy*, 11.

[133] United States Agency International Development, *USAID Development Response to Violent Extremism and Insurgency* (Washington, DC: USAID, 2011), 1.

[134] Ibid., 3.

[135] Ibid., 4.

projects, the strategy outlines USAID's method of identifying the drivers for violent extremism and insurgency, prioritizing the drivers, establishing clear goals, designing a focuses set of interventions, and conducting evaluations of the progress and impact of the project.[136] Similar to all other strategies, the document affirms the whole-of-government concept by acknowledging that USAID must coordinate with other U.S. departments and agencies for an integrated approach to achieve U.S. national security objectives.[137]

F.   CONCLUSION

As this chapter reports, the departments and agencies responsible for implementing the U.S. instruments of national power against terrorist organizations have broad strategies that specifically address a whole-of-government approach in CT operations. Recurring themes across the strategies include: addressing the issues of fragile states, building partnerships with host governments, strengthening the capacity of the host nation security forces, countering terrorist organizations' messaging, conducting U.S. precision strikes, using U.S. Special Operations Forces, countering the messages of terrorist organizations, and ensuring the DOS leads in operations. The recurring themes correlate with what the CT literature would expect from a nation combating terrorist organizations. The strategies support the hypothesis that centers on armed drone operations coinciding with an increase in other instruments of national power because all of the strategies acknowledge no one instrument, particularly the military, can solely accomplish the U.S. objectives against AQ and affiliates. The following case studies will examine this assumption to determine if U.S. actions in Yemen and Somalia mesh with U.S. intentions set forth in this chapter.

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[136] United States Agency International Development, *USAID Development Response*, 9.

[137] Ibid., 6.

III. YEMEN

This strategy of taking out terrorists who threaten us, while supporting partners on the front lines, [while not deploying U.S. troops] is one that we have successfully pursued in Yemen and Somalia for years.

—President Obama, September 2014.[138]

Figure 3. Map of Yemen.[139]

A.   BACKGROUND ON YEMEN, AQAP, AND THE U.S. GOALS FOR THE COUNTRY

Yemen provides an ideal safe haven for Islamic terrorist organizations because of geography, tribalism, a poor economy, and weak governance. Strategically located along the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, Yemen forms part of the strategic maritime chokepoint known as the Bab el-Mandeb. The terrain ranges from vast open deserts in the east to

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[138] "Statement by the President on ISIL," White House, September 10, 2014, https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/09/10/statement-president-isil-1.

[139] Source: "Vascular Plant Flora and Phytogeography of the Southern Governorates of Yemen," BGBM, accessed December 19, 2016, https://www.bgbm.org/en/research-flora-and-vegetation-arabian-peninsula-and-socotra/vascular-plant-flora-and-phytogeography.

unforgiving mountainous terrain, rising above 3,000 meters, in the west.[140] Also, tribalism pervades Yemeni society. Tribes often act as their own governing bodies that impose laws and control territory.[141] Furthermore, the country epitomizes a weak state. Political scientist Joel S. Migdal describes strong states as ones that "penetrate society, regulate social relationships, extract resources, and appropriate or use resources in determined ways";[142] Yemen's central government lacks these capabilities. Additionally, Yemen is poor. In 2014, the country had a GDP per capita of $1,418, what many consider ranks as the Arab world's poorest.[143] Since Yemen's unification in 1990, the country has experienced three serious, unrelated security challenges: a Zaydi rebellion in the north led by the Houthi militia, secession sentiments from the south, and terrorist organizations finding sanctuaries in the east.[144] Therefore, terrorist organizations, insurgencies, and rebellions have routinely exploited Yemen's favorable environment and delicate political situation.

Unlike other terrorist organizations, AQAP presents a direct threat to the United States. AQAP formed from the merger of AQ's Saudi and Yemen branch in January 2009.[145] Significant for the United States, Nasir al-Wihayshi, along with two former Guantanamo Bay detainees, led and announced the merger and promised to kill Americans.[146] AQAP has the goal of establishing an Islamic emirate and, therefore, seeks to seize and control territory.[147] AQAP rationalizes targeting Americans because AQAP

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[140] "The World Factbook: Yemen," Central Intelligence Agency, April 17, 2017, https://www.cia.gov/ library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ym.html.

[141] Gregory D. Johnsen, *The Last Refuge* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 2013), 7.

[142] Joel S. Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1988), 3-4.

[143] "UN Data: Yemen," The United Nations, accessed October 29, 2016, http://data.un.org/ CountryProfile.aspx?crName=yemen.

[144] *Yemen: Confronting AQ, preventing state failure: Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate*, 111th Cong., 2 (2010), 38.

[145] Johnsen, *The Last Refuge*, xiv.

[146] Johnsen, *The Last Refuge*, xiv.

[147] Frederick W. Kagan, "Al Qaeda's Yemen Strategy," Critical Threats, June 21, 2011, www.criticalthreats.org/yemen/al-qaeda-arabian-peninsula.

believes the United States appoints regimes that oppress Muslims.[148] Apart from working to establish an emirate in Yemen, AQAP has demonstrated its capability and willingness to attack the United States. AQAP orchestrated the failed 2009 Christmas Day bomb attack, the October 2010 parcel bomb plot, and the May 2012 airline bomb plot.[149] In addition to its Arabic publications, AQAP was the first terrorist organization to produce an English language online magazine, *Inspire*. First published in 2010, *Inspire* broadened AQAP's audience by breaking the language barrier, and it contains a variety of information, such as instructions on bomb-making, directions on using encryption software, and translated speeches from AQ leadership.[150]

The 2011 Arab Spring in Yemen only made the country more fragile and fruitful for the various rebels, insurgencies, and terrorist organizations. The demands from the Arab Spring included President Ali Abdullah Saleh leave office, after more than 30 years as president.[151] Saleh eventually agreed to leave on November 23, 2011, when he capitulated to the Transition Agreement, brokered by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).[152] The Transition Agreement transferred the authority of president to Yemen's Vice-President, Abd Rabbuh Mansur al-Hadi.[153] Prior to the Arab Spring, AQAP initially gained its foothold in the east, establishing safe havens that extended from the border of Saudi Arabia in the al-Jawf governorate to the coastline in the Shabwah governorate.[154] AQAP plotted, recruited, and carried out their early attacks from the safe havens in the

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[148] Suroosh Alvi, "Terror Part 1 of 5: al-Qaeda in Yemen," *Vice News*, October 17, 2016, https://news.vice.com/story/al-qaeda-is-alive-and-thriving-in-yemen-terror-episode-1.

[149] Kagan, "Al Qaeda's Yemen Strategy."

[150] Kathrine Zimmerman, "Expanding the Campaign of Violence: al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula's English-Language Magazine," Critical Threats, July 13, 2010, http://www.criticalthreats.org/yemen/expanding-campaign-violence-al-qaeda-arabian-peninsulas-english-language-magazine-july-13-2010.

[151] Victoria Clark, *Yemen: Dancing on the Heads of Snakes* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 130–131.

[152] "Yemen Transition Agreement, 2011," *Al-Bab*, last modified August 4, 2015, http://www.al-bab.com/arab/docs/yemen/yemen_transition_agreement.htm.

[153] Ibid.

[154] Katherine Zimmerman, "Al-Qaeda in Yemen: Countering the threat from the Arabian Peninsula," Critical Threats, October 2012, http://www.criticalthreats.org/yemen/zimmerman-qaeda-yemen-countering-threat-arabian-peninsula-october-19-2012.

east. While the Saleh government fought for its survival during Yemen's Arab Spring in early 2011, AQAP exploited the instability. AQAP formed an insurgency wing, Ansar al-Sharia (in English: the Supporters of Sharia) and made its push to gain territory, capturing cities in Shabwa and Abyan provinces.[155] To prevent AQAP's push toward Aden, the government reinforced its military, which successfully stopped the AQAP advance and, after the presidential transition, eventually regained control of Abyan and Shabwa provinces in June 2012.[156] The Houthi rebels also gained strength and territory resulting from the Arab Spring. The Arab Spring and resultant weak government allowed the Houthis to slowly advance south from Sa'ada province in the north. The Houthi successfully seized the government in 2015, eventually captured territory extending to Aden in the south, provoked the GCC to launch a military campaign, and started the current civil war in Yemen. During this civil war, AQAP has exploited the chaos and regained territory captured during its 2011 push.[157]

Under the Obama Administration, the United States increased its CT campaign in Yemen. The campaign included clandestine operations to target AQAP leaders and capabilities.[158] This thesis seeks to explore how the application of armed drone strikes in weak or failed states have interacted with other elements of national power to achieve the objectives outlined in United States' CT strategy. AQAP's establishment coincides with Obama's first year in office. For this case study, the period of time for evaluation will include the U.S. strategy for Yemen from Obama's inauguration in January 2009 until December 2013, the year prior to the Houthi advance.[159]

The *National Strategy for Counterterrorism* characterizes AQAP as a threat to the United States and outlines the means to confront the terrorist organization. The

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[155] Ibid., 4.

[156] Ibid., 8.

[157] Katherine Zimmerman, "AQAP Expanding behind Yemen's Frontlines," Critical Threats, February 17, 2016, http://www.criticalthreats.org/yemen/zimmerman-aqap-expanding-behind-yemens-frontlines-february-17-2016.

[158] Zimmerman, "Al-Qaeda in Yemen," 7.

[159] Laura Kasinof, "Requiem for Yemen's Revolution," *The Atlantic*, January 25, 2015, http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/01/requiem-for-yemens-revolution/384808/.

document promotes an end-state of Yemeni security forces disrupting, dismantling, and defeating AQAP with finite U.S. participation.[160] The strategy recognizes that Yemen, the safe haven for AQAP, experiences turbulent political, security, and economic conditions that will directly affect the United States.[161] The document states that U.S. CT operations coincide with larger efforts to "stabilize the country and prevent state failure" and that the United States works with partners to implement "political and economic development initiatives that address the underlying conditions that allow Yemen to serve as a safe haven for AQAP."[162]

B.   MILITARY

Drone strikes represent one tool of CT in Yemen from 2009–2013. Assessing the military instrument of power remains difficult because of the classified nature of the activities. Data, however, exists on the resources the U.S. government devoted to the military instrument of power. The resources allow an assessment of the other tools the military used in its CT strategy in Yemen.

1.   Drone Strikes

The available data on drone strikes in Yemen contain variations. From 2009–2013, the CIA conducted drone operations in Yemen.[163] The U.S. government does not release official records for its drone strikes, yet a handful of non-profit organizations exist that track media reports of drone strikes and attempt to confirm the strikes across multiple sources. After the first drone strike in 2002, no drone strike in Yemen occurred for eight years.[164] Numerous outlets confirm 2010 as the year that armed drone operations resumed,

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[160] White House, *National Strategy for Counterterrorism,* 14.

[161] Ibid.

[162] Ibid.

[163] Brian Dodwell and Marielle Ness, "A View From the CT Foxhole: An Interview with Captain Robert A. Newson, Military Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations," *Combating Terrorism Center Sentinel* 8, no. 2 (Feb 2015), 3, https://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/a-view-from-the-ct-foxhole-an-interview-with-captain-robert-a-newson-military-fellow-council-on-foreign-relations.

[164] "Get the Data: Drone Wars," The Bureau of Instigative Journalism, accessed November 19, 2016. https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/category/projects/drones/drones-graphs/. Information obtained from "The Complete Yemen Data Sheet."

yet the United States conducted armed strikes via other platforms in 2009.[165] As Yemen underwent political turmoil from its 2011 Revolution, the United States increased its drone strikes after the transfer of power to Hadi. Table 1 presents drone strike statistics from two reputable organizations. The data differs between the two organizations but clearly shows that, one, drone strikes increased, and, two, the strikes culminated in 2012.

Table 1.   Drone Strike Statistics for Yemen, 2009–2013.[166]

The Center For the Study of Targeted Killing					
Year	Drone Strikes	Total Killed	Suspected Militants Killed	Civilians Killed	Unknowns
2009	0	0	0	0	0
2010	1	0	0	4	0
2011	18	140	83	37	20
2012	54	388	360	24	4
2013	31	140	112	21	7
The Bureau of Investigative Journalism					
2009	0	0	-	-	-
2010	0	0	-	-	-
2011	9	74	-	38	-
2012	44	236	-	10	-
2013	22	104	-	31	-

2.   Security Cooperation

The U.S. military contributed to the CT effort in Yemen through security cooperation. An all-encompassing name, a RAND study defines security cooperation as "those activities conducted with allies and friendly nations to build relationships that promote specified U.S. interests, build allied and friendly nation capabilities for self-defense and coalition operations and supporting institutional capacity, [and] provide the

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[165] Ibid.

[166] Adapted from "Get the Data: Drone Wars," The Bureau of Instigative Journalism, accessed November 19, 2016. https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/category/projects/drones/drones-graphs/. The data in the table is from the Bureau of Investigative Journalism's "Complete Yemen Datasheet," and the figures reflect the averages from the minimum and maximum figures; "U.S. Attacks in Yemen," The Center for the Study of Targeted Killing, accessed December 12, 2016. http://www.targetedkilling.org/database/list.

U.S. forces with peacetime and contingency access."[167] Congress passed a statute in 2005 referred to as Section 1206, which granted the Secretary of Defense the legal authorization to train and equip foreign military units with a focus on counterterrorism.[168] Since Section 1206's implementation, Yemen has been the largest beneficiary.[169] Congress also passed Section 1207 programs, which transfers DOD funds to the DOS with the goal of assisting in minor military construction, equipment, training, and supplies to the Ministry of the Interior's counterterrorism forces.[170] Figure 4 illustrates the amount of Section 1206 and 1207 funding that the DOD committed to Yemen from FY 2009–2013. Table 2 breaks down the funding from Figure 4.
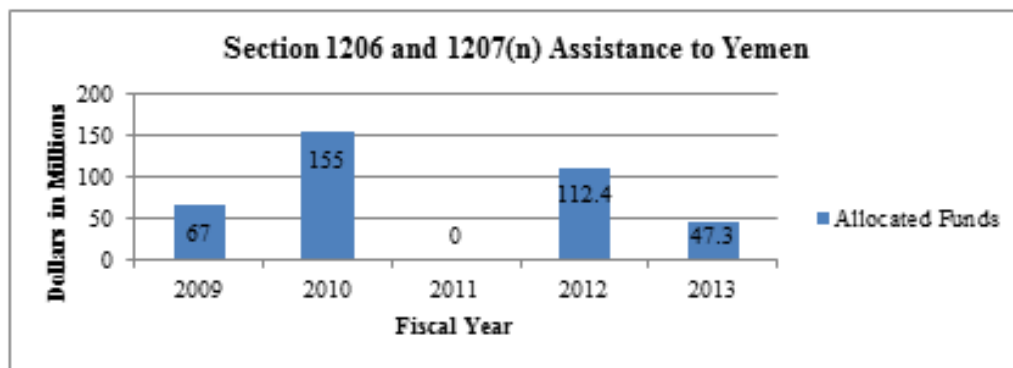
Figure 4. Section 1206 and 1207 (n) Assistance to Yemen, 2009–2013.[171]

[167] Jennifer D. P. Moroney, David Thaler, and Joe Hogleer, *Review of Security Cooperation Mechanisms Combatant command Utilize to Build Partner Nation Capability* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2013), 1, http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR413.html.

[168] Nina M. Serafino, *Security Assistance Reform: Section 1206 Background and Issues for Congress* (CRS Report no. RS22855) (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2014), 8, https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RS22855.pdf.

[169] Ibid., 5.

[170] Michael Johnson Jr. *Yemen: DOD Should Improve Accuracy of Its Data on Congressional Clearance of Projects as it Reevaluates Counterterrorism Assistance* (GAO-15-493) (Washington, DC: Government Accountability Office, 2015), 5, http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-15-493; Joseph A. Cristoff, *DOD and State Need to Improve Sustainment Planning and Monitoring and Evaluation for Section 1206 and 1207 Assistance Program* (GAO-10-431) (Washington, DC: Government Accountability Office, 2010) http://www.gao.gov/assets/310/303180.pdf..

[171] Adapted from Charles M. Johnson Jr. *Uncertain Political and Security Situation Challenges U.S. Efforts to Implement a Comprehensive Strategy in Yemen* (GAO-12-432R) (Washington, DC: Government Accountability Office, 2012), 10. http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-12-432R.

All programs in Table 2 provide equipment and training with the overall intent of enhancing the capabilities of the Republic of Yemen Government (RoYG) forces. A breakdown of 1206 funding is as follows:

Table 2.   Military Aid Programs for Yemen, 2009–2013. Dollars in Millions.[172]

Fiscal Year 2009 Programs	Dollars in Millions
Aerial Surveillance Counterterrorism Initiative	$5.9
Counterterrorism Initiative for Increased Border Security	$25.4
Coast Guard Patrol Maritime Security CT Initiative	$30.1
Explosive Ordnance Disposal Counterterrorism Initiative	$5.8
	Total $67.2
Fiscal Year 2010 Programs	Dollars in Millions
Special Operations Force CT Enhancement Package	$34.5
Rotary-Wing Medium Lift	$82.8
Fixed-Wing Tactical Heavy Lift	$38
	Total $155.3
Fiscal Year 2011 Programs	Dollars in Millions
N/A	N/A
Fiscal Year 2012 Programs	Dollars in Millions
1207 (n) Ministry of Interior Counterterrorism Enhancement	$75
Special Operations Forces Counterterrorism Enhancement	$14
Fixed-Wing Capability	$23.4
	Total $112.4
Fiscal Year 2013 Programs	Dollars in Millions
Integrated Border and Maritime Security	$47.3
	Total $47.3

The programs in FY2010 and increase in money coincide with a robust initiative to specifically increase the country's CT capabilities. For instance, the "Special Operations Force Counterterrorism Enhancement Package" included training and equipment specifically for Yemeni Special Operations Forces (YSOF).[173] The rotary-wing and fixed-wing packages ostensibly aimed to provide the YSOF the means to maneuver on AQAP within the country. No programs during FY2011 synchronized with political unrest during Yemen's revolution. The increase in programs for FY2012 correlated with an increase in drone strikes. In the history of drone strikes in Yemen, the most occurred in FY2012. Although FY2010 had more funding than FY2012, a Government

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[172] Adapted from Johnson, *Yemen: DOD Should Improve Accuracy,* 33-34.

[173] Johnson, *Yemen: DOD Should Improve Accuracy,* 33-34.

Accountability Office report indicates an 80% delivery of the projects for FY2012 compared to a late transfer of nearly all the projects for FY2010,[174] suggesting a degree of urgency existed for Yemen in FY2012. The Houthis caused the discrepancy in the allocated funding and actual disbursement for FY2013. The advances of the Houthi militia during late 2013 and early 2014 prompted the DOD to postpone the delivery of the border security programs.[175]

Table 3 indicates the amount of Yemenis the DOD trained, either in Yemen or in other countries such as the United States or training facilities in the region.

Table 3.   U.S.-Trained Yemeni Military Personnel, 2009–2013.[176]

Year	Number of Yemenis Trained
2009	424
2010	544
2011	220
2012	375
2013	274

Although Table 3 shows pre-revolution numbers as the highest, it appears the DOD made efforts to increase training output in 2012, the year of the most drone strikes.

The DOS supports military assistance to Yemen, separate from the DOD's Section 1206 aid. For instance, the DOS provides Yemen funding through Foreign Military Financing (FMF); Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, De-mining, and Related Programs (NADR); International Military Education and Training (IMET); and International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE).[177] As Table 4 illustrates, the DOS military aid funds increased along with the drone strikes.

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[174] Ibid., 16.

[175] Ibid.

[176] Adapted from "Data: Training, Yemen 2009–2013," Security Assistance Monitor, accessed December 13, 2016, http://securityassistance.org/data/country/trainee.

[177] Johnson, *Yemen: DOD Should Improve Accuracy,* 9.

Table 4.   DOS Funded Military Aid to Yemen, 2009–2013.
Dollars in Millions.[178]

Program	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
FMF	$3	$13	$20	$20	$19
IMET	$1	$1	$1	$1	$1
INCLE	-	$1	$2	$11	$8
NADR	$2	$5	$5	$4	$6
Total	$6	$20	$28	$36	$34

3.   Analysis

Analysis of security cooperation and drone strikes finds a positive correlation. Preparation for the RoYG's offensive against AQAP's Ansar al-Sharia began in April 2012, when local tribes allied with RoYG forces.[179] The offensive began in May to clear AQAP from Abyan province, and the RoYG declared victory over Ansar al-Sharia on June 17, 2012, when the last stronghold of AQAP fell in Shabwa province.[180] The drone strike database from TBIJ contains the provinces of confirmed and possible drone strikes. During the RoYG's preparation and conduct of its offensive against AQAP, an increase in confirmed and possible drone strikes occurred in Abyan and Shabwa provinces. From April to June 17, 2012, 20 possible and confirmed drone strikes occurred in Abyan and seven possible and confirmed drone strikes occurred in Shabwa province.[181] For the entirety of 2012, TBIJ reports 51 total possible and confirmed drone strikes in Yemen.[182] More than half of the total confirmed and possible drone strikes in Yemen occurred in the two provinces during the two and half months that the RoYG conducted its offensive against AQAP, implying that drone strikes in Yemen fit into a greater military strategy.

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[178] Adapted from "Data: Military Aid, DOS Programs, Yemen 2009–2013, "Security Assistance Monitor, accessed December 13, 2016, http://securityassistance.org/data/country/military/country/2009/2013/is_foreign_ops/Global.

[179] Zimmerman, "Al-Qaeda in Yemen," 8.

[180] Ibid., 9.

[181] "Get the data: Drone Wars," The Bureau of Instigative Journalism, accessed December 20, 2016, https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/category/projects/drones/drones-graphs/.

[182] Ibid.

U.S. forces had an advise and assist role in the RoYG force's offensive against AQAP. U.S. Navy Captain Robert A. Newson served as Special Operations Command Central (SOCCENT) (Forward) in Yemen from 2010–2012.[183] In an interview with the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, CAPT Newson states SOCCENT had no role in drone strikes in Yemen, but better cooperation existed between the RoYG and SOCCENT under Hadi.[184] After Yemen's presidential transition, CAPT Newson led a team in early 2012 that advised the RoYG's Southern Regional Commander on his strategy to retake ground from AQAP.[185] Hadi was more willing to have SOCCENT personnel assist with intelligence operations and fire support, which would enable RoYG forces to recover territory from AQAP.[186] Apart from acknowledging the advise and assist role improved under President Hadi in 2012, CAPT Newson remains cryptic on specific details of SOCCENT's role in the 2012 RoYG offensive against AQAP. Nonetheless, some level of coordination must have existed with forces on the ground because of the vast amount of drone strikes that occurred over a two and a half month period during the offensive.

C. DIPLOMATIC

While the U.S. CT operations increased starting in FY2009, one can also observe an increase in diplomatic efforts. The Obama Administration had a two-prong strategy for Yemen in 2009: first, to strengthen the RoYG's capability to secure its population and decrease the threat from violent extremists and, second, to enhance the capacity to provide good governance and essential services.[187] This strategy required working with Yemen's President Saleh. Two key diplomatic initiatives that the United States encouraged prior to the revolution included a cease-fire between RoYG and the Houthis

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[183] Dodwell, "A View From the CT Foxhole," 2.

[184] Ibid.

[185] Ibid., 3.

[186] Ibid.

[187] Daniel Benjamin, "Remarks at Jamestown Yemen Conference," United States Department of State, April 15, 2010, http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/rm/2010/140327.htm.

in 2010 and political dialogue with leaders from South Yemen.[188] The pre-revolution diplomatic efforts demonstrate that the DOS attempted to keep Yemen together. Also, a key diplomatic achievement prior to the revolution included establishing the Friends of Yemen, which the United States and Britain formed on January 27, 2010.[189] The Friends of Yemen intended to increase donor coordination and enhance international support to prevent Yemen from becoming a failed state.[190] Post-revolution, the DOS's main aim supported the GCC's political transition initiative.[191] The DOS stated the goal: "We support the Yemeni government and people with a comprehensive strategy to promote the political, economic, and security sector reforms underpinning the country's GCC-brokered political transition initiative."[192] The main diplomatic initiatives included technical assistance to constitutional reforms, advising and training for improved elections, and assisting the RoYG enhance services to the south.[193]

The DOS devoted foreign aid to achieve its goals of enhancing good governance. Six programs, displayed in Table 5, constitute the DOS's support for good governance. The Economic Support Fund (ESF), Complex Crisis Fund (CCF), Transition Initiative (TI), and the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) all aim to support stability, education, governance, and economic development.[194] The DOS also devoted funds to refugees and migration problems in Yemen through the Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA) and Emergency Migration and Refugee Assistance (EMRA).[195]

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[188] Daniel Benjamin, "U.S. Counterterrorism Strategy in Yemen," United States Department of State, September 8, 2010, https://2009-2017.state.gov/j/ct/rls/rm/2010/147296.htm.

[189] Jeremy M. Sharp, *Yemen: Background and U.S. Relations* (CRS Report no. RL34170) (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2015), 23, https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL34170.pdf; "Friends of Yemen: Questions and Answers," United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office, February 1, 2013, https://www.gov.uk/government/news/friends-of-yemen-q-a.

[190] Foreign and Commonwealth Office, "Friends of Yemen: Questions and Answers."

[191] Ibid.

[192] "U.S. Relations with Yemen," United States Department of State, accessed December 23, 2016, http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/35836.htm.

[193] Ibid.

[194] "Economic Support Fund," United States Department of State, accessed December 16, 2016, 1, 2, www.state.gov/documents/organization/101425.pdf; "Congressional Budget Justification: Fiscal Year 2015," United States Department of State, accessed December 20, 2016, 97, 98, www.**state**.gov/documents/organization/222898.pdf.

[195] Department of State, "Economic Support Fund," 2.

Table 5. DOS Diplomatic Aid to Yemen, 2009–2013. Dollars in Millions.[196]

Account	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013
ESF	$20	$5	$55	$65.353	$78.881
CCF	0	$12.807	0	0	0
MRA	$10	$13	$23	$19.738	$18.886
EMRA	0	$7.800	0	0	0
TI	0	$5.492	$3.850	$4.527	$5.763
MEPI	$1.958	$.333	n/a	$4.683	$5.698
Total	$31.958	$44.432	$81.85	$94.301	$109.228

1.   Analysis

Diplomatic efforts from 2009–2013 align with the 2010 QDDR's intent of promoting good governance to counter terrorist organizations. The diplomatic instrument sought to address the root issues that make Yemen a fragile state, such as the assistance to the south. Likewise, Table 5 shows a marked increase in DOS aid to RoYG as the U.S. drone campaign also increased, but the increases may reflect President Hadi being a better partner than Saleh. More analysis of diplomatic efforts can be seen under the economic instrument.

D.   ECONOMIC

Although the United States flexes its economic muscle to fund military and diplomatic programs, the United States employs its economic instrument in Yemen in other ways. For example, the United States has levied sanctions against AQAP and individuals who threaten Yemen's stability. The U.S. efforts for sanctions against AQAP began after the organization announced its formation in January 2009.[197] Washington achieved UN-backed sanctions on AQAP and its leaders in 2010 under an updated UN Resolution 1267, which froze assets and emplaced a travel ban and arms embargo on the organization.[198] In 2012, the United States published Executive Order 13611, which placed U.S. economic sanctions against anyone Washington deemed undermining the

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[196] Adapted from Sharp, "Yemen," 29.

[197] Benjamin, "U.S. Counterterrorism Strategy in Yemen."

[198] Ibid.

stability of the Yemen transitional government.[199] Since destabilizing progress would primarily benefit AQAP, the order, ostensibly, sent a warning to Saleh and other powerful figures in Yemen who sought to subvert the transition and stability in Yemen.

Trade represents another economic tool that the United States can either harm or use to support countries and, therefore, can play a part in a CT strategy. Yemen mainly exports oil, and this has damaged its economy. Since the 1990s, oil took over Yemen's exports, which helped the Yemen government fund needed developments but also caused Yemen to experience a "Dutch Disease," diminishing significance of the domestic commodity producing sectors.[200] For the years under review, the United States typically hovered between the sixth and fifteenth largest trading partner with Yemen while China consistently remained first.[201]

Table 6 illustrates uneven U.S. trade with Yemen. One cannot conclude the variations correlate with a CT strategy, and the discrepancies likely account for the unstable nature of Yemen's economy. For instance, the sharp increase in trade in 2011 that consisted predominantly in oil likely sought to prevent Yemen from plummeting further into chaos during its revolution.

Table 6.   Yemen's Exports to the United States, 2009–2013.
Dollars in Millions.[202]

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Total Trade	$25,519	$148,350	$306,976	$55,031	$57,891
Fuel Traded	$3	$118,327	$274,460	$14,074	$45,187
%	0.000117559	0.797620492	0.89407641	0.255746761	0.780553108

[199] "Yemen Related Sanctions: Executive Order 13611," United States Department of Treasury, last modified March 9, 2017, https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/pages/yemen.aspx.

[200] Charles Schmitz, "Crisis in the Yemen Economy: a Troubled Transition to Post-hydrocarbon Growth," *Middle East Institute*, December 2011, 5, http://www.mei.edu/content/crisis-yemeni-economy-troubled-transition-post-hydrocarbon-growth.

[201] "Yemen Exports By Country," WITS: World Integrated Trade Solution, accessed December 14, 2016, http://wits.worldbank.org/CountryProfile/en/Country/YEM/Year/2012/TradeFlow/Export/Partner/by-country.

[202] Adapted from WITS, "Yemen Exports By Country."

Nonetheless, the trade statistics in Table 6 demonstrate that Washington attempts to diversify its imports from Yemen as opposed perpetuating Yemen's main export of oil. By the United States seeking other exports than oil, Yemen can develop additional sectors of its economy, and this contributes to long-term stability. Compared to Yemen's primary trading partner China, Table 7 shows that Yemen's export of oil to China remains above 97%. This indicates China has no desire to assist Yemen's economy diversify, at least through trade.

Table 7.   Yemen's Exports to China, 2009–2013. Dollars in Millions.[203]

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Total Trade	1,577,791	1,429,663	2,250,742	2,898,790	1,718,840
Fuel Traded	1,546,122	1,389,087	2,213,774	2,876,479	1,687,033
%	0.979928267	0.971618486	0.983575194	0.99230334	0.981495078

U.S. economic strength allows for a robust economic aid program to Yemen. For economic assistance, USAID devotes six programs to Yemen. Some of these programs merge with the diplomatic instrument and can assist the information instrument as well, but the six programs displayed in Table 8 ultimately devote money to the individual Yemeni in need, rather than address the structural problems in governance as the diplomatic aid programs provide. USAID used Development Assistance (DA), Food for Peace (FFP), International Disaster assistance (IDA), Global Health and Child Survival (GHCS), Conflict Management and Mitigation (CMM), and the Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA) budgets all to reduce poverty and suffering and provide needed food and essential health services to Yemenis.[204]

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[203] Adapted from "Products Exported by Yemen to China," WITS: World Integrated Trade Solution, accessed December 14, 2016, http://wits.worldbank.org/CountryProfile/en/Country/YEM/Year/2012/TradeFlow/Export/Partner/CHN/Product/All-Groups.

[204] "2017 Congressional Budget Justification Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs," United States Agency for International Development, last modified March 16, 2016, 82, 89, 97, 144, https://www.usaid.gov/results-and-data/budget-spending; "Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance," United States Agency for International Development, accessed December 14, 2016, 2, 8, https://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/organization/bureaus/bureau-democracy-conflict-and-humanitarian-assistance.

Table 8.   U.S. Economic Aid to Yemen, 2009–2013. Dollars in Millions.[205]

Account	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013
DA	$11	$35	$0	$0	$8.31
GHCS	$3	$8	$9	$7.89	$8.34
FFP	$2	$13	$20	$54.8	$50.2
IDA	$.59	$10.92	$20.21	$45.80	$61.81
CMM	$1.6	$1.2	$0	$0	$0
DCHA	$0	$0	$1.25	$.250	$0
Total	$18.19	$68.12	$50.46	$108.74	$128.66

Table 8 illustrates the U.S. aid to Yemen increased as the CT and drone campaign intensified. The political unrest in 2011 marks the decrease in aid, but the subsequent increases correlates to both an increase in drone strikes and humanitarian problems caused by the revolution.

1.   Analysis

Table 8 clearly showed an increase in economic aid as drone strikes and the CT campaign increased. Analyzing where the United States applied economic aid can allow one to see if the aid assisted the CT strategy by it being applied in the provinces with the most AQAP activity. Data on locations for USAID projects is unavailable for 2009. In March 2011, the USAID Regional Inspector General published an assessment of USAID projects in Yemen. The assessment reported that, from 2010 to February 2011, six USAID projects occurred in al-Jawf, nine in Marib, and nine in Shabwah, the three AQAP safe haven provinces prior to the revolution.[206] Also, the assessment stated the average number of projects for the 21 Yemen provinces as five.[207] Nine projects were the highest for any region and the only two that had nine projects were the two with AQAP safe havens, indicating some effort may have occurred to address the economic and humanitarian conditions that allow AQAP to prosper.

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[205] Adapted from Sharp, "Yemen," 29.

[206] Regional Inspector General/Cairo, "Risk Assessment of USAID/Yemen's Major Activities," United States Agency for International Development, March 30, 2011, 19, https://oig.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/audit-reports/6-279-11-001-s.pdf; Zimmerman, "Al-Qaeda in Yemen,"4.

[207] Ibid.

Data exists on the provinces that received aid from 2012–2013. In Table 9, TBIJ reported eight provinces received drone strikes in the calendar year of 2012.

Table 9.   Yemeni Provinces that Received Drone Strikes and the Number of U.S. Aid Projects, 2012–2013.[208]

Province	2012 Possible and Confirmed Drone Strikes	2012 Aid Projects	2013 Possible and Confirmed Drone Strikes	2013 Aid Projects
Abyan	29	12	5	16
Bayda	9	6	5	9
Shabwah	13	7	3	9
Marib	3	6	8	9
Hadramout	8	6	6	10
Sana'a	1	10	1	13
Sa'dah	1	8	0	9
Jawf	1	8	2	10
Dhamar	0	6	1	10
Lahij	0	6	1	13

The province with the largest amount of strikes was Abyan, which also reflects the largest amount of aid projects in FY2012. Although Abyan did not receive the most strikes in 2013, the province still received the most aid projects compared to the other provinces where drone strikes occurred; this indicates Abyan was still a focus for projects following the 2012 RoYG offensive. No other correlation can be drawn from the data. For instance, Marib province received the most strikes in 2013, yet only had the country average of nine aid projects.

E.   INFORMATION

Information exists as the hardest instrument to apply and quantify, yet, according to the literature and U.S. national strategies, it remains the most important in CT. Competing against an organization as AQAP is difficult because of the sophistication of

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[208] Adapted from "Get the data: Drone Wars," The Bureau of Instigative Journalism, accessed December 20, 2016, https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/category/projects/drones/drones-graphs/; "Yemen—Complex Emergency, FY12," United States Agency for International Development, September 30, 2013, https://www.usaid.gov/crisis/yemen/yemen-disaster-response-archive; "Yemen—Complex Emergency, FY13," United States Agency for International Development, September 30, 2013, https://www.usaid.gov/crisis/yemen/yemen-disaster-response-archive. Data on aid projects reflect fiscal year projects while the drone strike data reflects the calendar year date reported by the TBIJ.

AQAP's narrative and message. Also, AQAP's presence on the ground allows it to immediately respond to local dynamics as compared to the United States, which has to work through intermediaries, often belatedly.

The United States' BBG focuses content in the region but none specifically tailored to Yemen. For example, in 2004, the BBG established *al-Hurra*, an Arabic-language news channel that airs throughout the region to include Yemen. Nevertheless, a 2013 study showed when compared to *al-Jazeera*, the BBC, or *al-Arabya*, viewers remain skeptical of *al-Hurra* because of U.S. government backing.[209] The BBG also airs Radio Sawa in the region to include Yemen. Unlike its pre-9/11 predecessor, Voice of America Arabic, which delivered 12 hours of news in its daily broadcasts, Radio Sawa primarily airs popular music with limited airtime for news.[210] The BBG's yearly *Performance Accountability Reports* from FY2009-2013 do not highlight Yemen in the goals for the Arabic speaking world. The reports routinely highlight the BBG's efforts in Egypt, Iraq, Syria, and Libya but fail to mention any country specific goals for Yemen.[211]

The CT literature addresses the need to focus on the population. Ostensibly, applying the information instrument of national power should focus on the future recruit for AQAP. Analyzing the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a's English press releases, one can observe an increase in the promulgation of U.S. sponsored youth programs in the region. The press releases do not capture all the efforts of the U.S. government during the period under observation, and the U.S. government likely released more to the Arabic media. Nonetheless, the English press releases demonstrate a focus on using information to highlight the efforts on working with the youth. From U.S. ambassador speeches at universities to community youth programs, the amount of youth related press releases started from two in 2009 and increased to ten by 2013, while the political situation in

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[209] Mahmod Jasim al-Samydai, "Measuring Individual Attitude towards Arabic-Speaking TV Channels and the Impact of These Channels on Current Events," *International Journal of Business and Management* 8, no. 1 (2013): 85, doi:10.5539/ijbm.v8n1p73.

[210] "Information Operations: Successes and Failures," YouTube video, 5:04, from Robert Reilly's speech to the Westminster Institute on September 6, 2013, posted by "WestministerInstitute," September 30, 2013, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kw_YdHJkDcs.

[211] "Performance and Accountability Reports," Broadcasting Board of Governors, accessed December 16, 2016, https://www.bbg.gov/strategy-and-performance/performance-accountability/.

Yemen prevented any releases concerning the youth in 2011.[212] Yemeni students studying in the United States also showed a slight increase during the time span. In 2009, 249 Yemenis studied in the United States; from 2010–2012, the number remained relatively the same at an average of 267; and, in 2013, the amount of students increased to 353.[213] The increase of press releases and number of students demonstrate an increased information effort.

Analyzing the DOS's yearly *Country Reports on Terrorism*, one can see an increased effort in the United States using information. The reports indicate the broad strategy the United States applied in CT efforts in the Middle East and world, and it provides a brief summary of efforts in Yemen. In 2009, the DOS's annual *Country Report on Terrorism* boasted of the Digital Outreach Team (DOT) as a tool for countering violent extremists. In 2009, the DOT consisted of ten civil servants fluent in Arabic who updated social media sites, posted content on YouTube, and posted messages on discussion forums.[214] The DOT represents an overt attempt in a counter-narrative campaign, and it had a mission to justify U.S. foreign policy and to respond to anti-U.S. falsities.[215] The DOS's 2010 report highlighted the establishment of the CSCC to synchronize communication efforts against AQ and its affiliates,[216] which the DOT would fall under. The 2010 report also incorporated the BBG's efforts in disseminating unbiased news to the region and, unlike the BBG's own *Performance Accountability Reports*, mentions efforts in Yemen.[217] The 2010 report appears to indicate how the government uses multiple tools for information.

[212] "U.S. Embassy Press Releases," Embassy of the United States, Sana'a, Yemen, accessed, December 16, 2016, https://yemen.usembassy.gov/embassy_news.html.

[213] "International Students: All Places of Origin," Institute of International Education, accessed December 16, 2016, http://www.iie.org/Research-and-Publications/Open-Doors/Data/International-Students/All-Places-of-Origin#.WFQQh3qwmiw.

[214] "Digital Outreach Team," Counter Extremism, accessed December 15, 2016, https://www.counterextremism.org/resources/details/id/410.

[215] Lina Khatib, "Public Diplomacy 2.0: A Case Study of the U.S. Digital Outreach Team*," Middle East Institute* 66, no. 3 (2012): 453-72.

[216] "Chapter 5: Terrorist Safe Havens (Update to 7120 Report) 5.1.a-5.1.8. Strategies, Tactics and Tools for Disrupting or Eliminating Safe Havens," *Department of State 2010 Country Reports on Terrorism*, August 18, 2011, https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2010/index.htm.

[217] Ibid.

The DOS's *Country Reports on Terrorism* emphasized how the United States increased information efforts in terrorist organizations' safe havens. The 2011 report highlighted Secretary of State Clinton founding the Global Counterterrorism Forum, which offered a platform for experts and policy makers to identify problems, formulate solutions, and organize resources to counter terrorist organizations.[218] The 2011 report also addressed engaging women to counter violent extremists.[219] The 2012 report continued a lot of the information initiatives began in earlier reports, but it adds a "prison disengagement" initiative to decrease the probability of radicalization in prisons.[220] The 2012 report published statistics for the CSCC. It credits the CSCC with producing over 6,000 postings, 64 videos, and 65 graphics to counter online terrorist propaganda.[221] The 2013 report announced that the CSCC posted over 10,000 postings and 138 videos to counter extremist organizations and mentions the CSCC has a focus on Yemen.[222] The document also revealed a new global initiative started by Secretary of State Kerry, the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF), which supports local grassroots counter terrorism projects.[223] From 2009–2013, the reports show the United States had an information endeavor that it built upon each year.

1. Analysis

Overall from 2009–2013, the data shows the United States boosted its information efforts each year against AQAP as U.S. drone strikes increased and became routine. Additionally, information seems to synchronize with the other elements of national power. For instance, the CSCC focused its efforts on countering AQ's online rhetoric

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[218] "Chapter 5: Terrorist Safe Havens (Update to 7120 Report) 5.1.a-5.1.8. Strategies, Tactics and Tools for Disrupting or Eliminating Safe Havens," *Department of State 2011 Country Reports on Terrorism*, July 31, 2012, https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2011/index.htm.

[219] Ibid.

[220] "Chapter 5: Terrorist Safe Havens (Update to 7120 Report) 5.1.a-5.1.8. Strategies, Tactics and Tools for Disrupting or Eliminating Safe Havens," *Department of State 2012 Country Reports on Terrorism*, May 30, 2013, https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2012/index.htm.

[221] Ibid.

[222] "Chapter 5: Terrorist Safe Havens (Update to 7120 Report) 5.1.a-5.1.8. Strategies, Tactics and Tools for Disrupting or Eliminating Safe Havens," *Department of State 2013 Country Reports on Terrorism*, April 2014, https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2013/index.htm.

[223] Ibid.

during the RoYG 2012 offensive. The director of the CSCC reported to a 2012 Committee of Foreign Affairs hearing that when AQAP made their advance to hold ground in southern Yemen in 2011–2012, the DOT centered on AQAP activities by making 600 posts that highlighted AQAP brutal methods and mocked the organization.[224] At the hearing, the director also stated the focus of the CSCC since its creation in 2011 has been on AQ and affiliates as opposed to other terrorist organizations.[225] The online push by the CSCC raises questions. According to the World Bank, from 2009–2013, Internet users per 100 people in Yemen rose from 9.6, 12.35, 14.95, and 20, respectively.[226] The areas in southern Yemen that AQAP made their advance in 2011–2012 likely have lower Internet access than the major populated areas. Therefore, DOTs efforts at undermining AQAP likely had little effect on influencing the populations in southern Yemen that AQAP advanced on but rather discredited AQAP's actions in general.

F.   SUMMARY

This chapter analyzed the data on drone strikes and the other instruments of national power used in Yemen from 2009–2013. The data showed a trend of an increase in most instruments. Drone strikes became routine during Yemen's revolution and afterward because AQAP exploited the chaos to seize territory, gaining its greatest expanse up to that point. Also, the increase in drone strikes likely reflects President Hadi serving as a better CT partner with the United States than Saleh and Washington realizing it needed to devote more aid to Yemen to alleviate the humanitarian crisis that resulted from the revolution. When drone strikes reached their all-time peak in 2012, an increase occurred in other military efforts, economic projects, and information operations. Of note, one notices drone strikes supporting RoYG forces as they fought to regain territory

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[224] *The State Department's Center For Strategic Counterterrorism Communications: Mission, Operations And Impact: Hearing before the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation and Trade*, 112th Cong. 2 (2012) (statement of Alberto M. Fernandez, Coordinator, Center of Strategic Counterterrorism Communications, U.S. Department of State), https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=724028.

[225] Ibid., 23.

[226] "Yemen: Internet Users Per 100 People," The World Bank, accessed December 16, 2016, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IT.NET.USER.P2.

from AQAP in 2012. Also, USAID sponsored more development programs in the provinces that receive the most drone strikes and have the greatest amount of AQAP activity. Although the United States makes efforts with the information instrument, it appears as the one instrument least applied. The data in this chapter supports one of the first two explanations from the introduction. First, armed drone strikes in conjunction with other instruments of U.S. national power account for successful counterterrorism operations in a country. Alternatively, it could support the second explanation: other instruments of national power aid armed drone operations but, as a grand strategy, have failed against terrorist organizations in the country.

IV.   SOMALIA

Somalia is a failure among failed states.

—Ken Menkhaus, political scientist and Somalia scholar.[227]
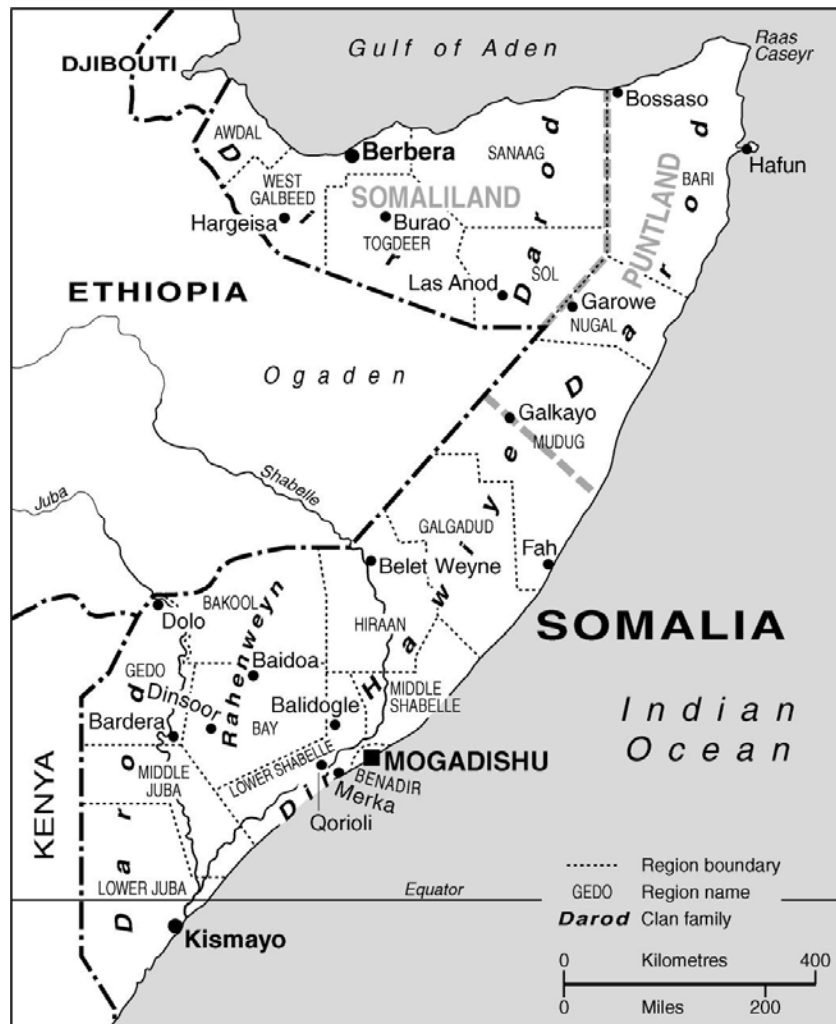

Figure 5. Map of Somalia.[228]

227 Ken Menkhaus, *Somalia: State Collapse and the Threat of Terrorism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 17.

228 Source: "Reconstructing the State Step-By-Step Is Showing Results But Outsiders Stay Skeptical," Africa Confidential, last modified September 24, 1999, http://www.africaconfidential.com/article/id/ 1342/ Building_blocks.

A.   INTRODUCTION

Somalia's status as a failed state provides fertile ground for growing terrorist organizations. When one imagines a failed state, Somalia often comes to mind. The Somali Civil War began in 1988 and led to the government of Somalia collapsing in 1991 when militias drove President Said Barre from power.[229] Somalia became fractured after Barre's ousting. Somaliland, located in the northwest, announced its independence from Somalia in 1991, yet the international community does not recognize its independence.[230] In 1998, Puntland, located in the northeast, formed its own governing body with the intention of eventually becoming part of a federated Somalia.[231] With Somaliland stable and Puntland relatively stable, terrorist attacks and foreign intervention predominantly occur in south-central Somalia. When this chapter refers to Somalia, it therefore refers to south-central Somalia. The Transitional Federal Government (TFG), the governing body that the international community works with, emerged in 2004 from the fourteenth attempt to establish a Somali government.[232]

Geography and social structures also contribute to the state failure of Somalia, placing its people at further risk of exploitation from terrorist organizations. Located on the Horn of Africa, Somalia has mountainous terrain in the north and low-lying plains and valleys with sparse vegetation to the south and central of Somalia.[233] Outside of the urban centers, Somalis are predominantly pastoral nomads because of the arid conditions.[234] The inhospitable conditions and lack of infrastructure makes it difficult for a central government to exercise authority over the periphery, thereby making it easy for terrorist

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[229] Thomas Melito, *Somalia: Several Challenges Limit U.S. and International Stabilization, Humanitarian, and Development Efforts* (GAO-08-351) (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2008), 6, http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d08351.pdf; Ken Menkhaus, "Non-state Security Providers and Political Formation in Somalia," *Center for Security Governance*, no. 5 (April 2016): 11, http://secgovcentre.org/csg-publications/csg-papers.

[230] Melito, *Somalia: Several Challenges*, 6. Britain, however, recognize its former colony of Somaliland as an independent governing body.

[231] Ibid.

[232] Stephanie Hanson and Eben Kaplan, "Somalia's Transition Government," The Council on Foreign Relations, last modified May 12, 2008, http://www.cfr.org/somalia/somalias-transitional government/p12475.

[233] I.M. Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali*, 4th ed. (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2002), 2, 3.

[234] Ibid., 2.

organizations to find a safe haven. Somalis form one of the largest ethnic groups in Africa, situated in Djibouti, Kenya, Ethiopia, and, of course, Somalia.[235] Consequently, Somali terrorist organizations can easily find recruits and gain support from Somalis in neighboring countries. In Somalia, Somalis are overwhelmingly Sunni Muslim.[236] Somalis base their society on patrilineal ancestry organized through clans. Lineage in Somalia offers several possible levels of social organization.[237] Therefore, clans have many sub-clans, and Somalis use their lineage to associate with different sub-clans or switch sub-clan affiliation when beneficial.[238] Terrorist organizations can likewise capitalize on the shifting loyalties in Somalia's clan structure.

1. U.S. Involvement, Growth of Al-Shabaab, and Involvement of Neighbors

After 9/11, the United States once again became concerned with Somalia, this time as a safe haven for terrorist organizations. Washington believed that AQ operatives would flee to failed countries like Somalia after U.S. forces invaded Afghanistan.[239] In 2003, the United States began covert operations that contributed to the rise of al-Shabaab. For example, the CIA used Mogadishu based warlord Mohamed Araf Qanyare to kill or capture foreign AQ operatives in Somalia.[240] Journalist Jeremy Scahill describes how the CIA operations devolved to Qanyare employing death squads that killed with no consequences, and Somalis saw Qanyare and his death squads as agents of the United States.[241] Out of this chaos emerged the Islamic Courts Union (ICU). In 2004, Somalia's twelve Islamic Courts united under Sheikh Sharif Sheik Ahmed to bring order to the turmoil attributed to Qanyare's activities.[242] *Harakat al-Shabaab al-Mujahideen*,

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[235] Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somali*, 1.

[236] "The World Factbook: Somalia," Central Intelligence Agency, February 25, 2017, https://www.cia.gov/library/ publications/the-world-factbook/geos/so.html.

[237] Alex De Wall, *The Real Politics of the Horn of Africa* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2015), 111.

[238] Ibid., 111; Menkhaus, *Somalia*, 11.

[239] Jeremy Scahill, *Dirty Wars: The World is a Battlefield* (New York: Nation Books, 2013), 122.

[240] Ibid., 127.

[241] Ibid., 192.

[242] Ibid., 193.

commonly known as al-Shabaab, also joined the ICU against the warlords.[243] Eritrea supported and equipped the ICU, and, by 2006, the ICU had gained enough strength that the U.S.-backed warlords formed the Alliance for Restoration of Peace and Counterterrorism (ARPC), which Washington publicly supported and funded.[244] Since the ICU provided an alternative to the despised CIA-sponsored warlords, the ICU found a wide base of support within Somalia.[245] The ICU defeated the U.S.-backed ARPC for control of Mogadishu on June 5, 2006.[246]

With the ICU in power, the Ethiopians became anxious about an Islamic-run Somalia and elicited U.S. support. The United States backed Ethiopia's invasion into Somalia, with the goal of installing an official government in Mogadishu protected by Ethiopian trained Somali forces and Ethiopian troops.[247] Ethiopia, backed by TFG forces, invaded and captured Mogadishu on December 28, 2006 with little resistance, and the ICU lost its final base to Ethiopian forces on January 1, 2007.[248] The African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) first deployed in March 2007 with the mandate to protect the TFG and allow for the Ethiopian withdrawal.[249] As the ICU fell, al-Shabaab started an insurgency against Ethiopia's and AMISOM's occupation.[250] Al-Shabaab became a popular movement for Somalis and quickly had a presence throughout Somalia, subjecting communities to its form of Islamic rule.[251] Al-Shabaab imposes Salafi methods of rule over

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[243] Scahill, *Dirty Wars*, 196.

[244] Ibid., 193.

[245] Ibid., 194.

[246] Ibid., 201.

[247] Scahill, *Dirty Wars*, 206.

[248] Ted Dagne, *Somalia: The Current Conditions and Prospects for a Lasting Peace* (CRS Report no. RL3391) (Washington, DC: *Congressional Research Service*, 2011), 17, https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33911.pdf.

[249] Walter Lotze and Paul D. Williams, "The Surge to Stabilize: Lessons for the UN from the AU's Experience in Somalia," International Peace Institute, May 2016, 2, https://www.ipinst.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/IPI-Rpt-Surge-to-Stabilize.pdf.

[250] Ibid., 225. Ethiopia also conducts operations in Somalia separate from AMISOM.

[251] Ibid.

the territory it controls, including a Salafi version of Sharia Law.[252] The group's goals directly challenge the stability of Somalia. Al-Shabaab seeks irredentism and to establish a "Greater Somalia" under its warped interpretation of Sharia Law.[253]

As Ethiopia and AMISOM started their activities in Somalia, the United States began direct CT operations. In 2007, the United States learned of al-Shabaab's ties to AQ and designated al-Shabaab a foreign terrorist organization in 2008.[254] With a Somali interim government installed in 2007, Washington started a series of U.S. strikes and raids into Somalia. The typical operation consisted of AC-130 gunships or other platforms attacking targets in Somalia and Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) teams landing afterward to gather intelligence.[255] CIVCAS from these strikes were high.[256]

By 2010, al-Shabaab had emerged as a powerful terrorist organization that could destabilize the region. For example, by 2010, al-Shabaab generated between $35 million and $50 million per year from port revenues alone, mostly from the charcoal trade.[257] Also, by 2010, out of all AQ affiliates, al-Shabaab governed the largest expanse of land.[258] Additionally, al-Shabaab launched a major offensive against AMISOM and the TFG in Mogadishu in August 2010.[259] Furthermore, by 2010, the terrorist organization established an influence in other countries in East Africa that would grow. In July 2010, al-Shabaab conducted its first major international suicide attack in Uganda that killed 76 people including one American.[260] Al-Shabaab's third largest international attack occurred in 2013 on the Westgate Shopping Mall in Nairobi, Kenya, and its largest attack

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[252] Christopher Daniels, "Somalia in the Horn of Africa Security Equation since September 2001," in *Africa in the New World Order: Peace and Security Challenges in the Twenty-first Century,* ed. Abegunrin, Olayiwola (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014), 204.

[253] Dagne, *Somalia,* 6.

[254] Ibid., 6–7.

[255] Scahill, *Dirty Wars*, 220.

[256] Ibid.

[257] Ibid., 394.

[258] Ibid., 396.

[259] Ibid., 397.

[260] Dagne, *Somalia*, 2.

occurred at Kenya's Garissa University in 2015, which killed 146 people.[261] Overall, al-Shabaab still has active cells in Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Djibouti.[262] Similarly, al-Shabaab actively recruits foreign fighters from the United States. In 2016, al-Shabaab released a recruitment video calling for African Americans to convert to Islam and conduct attacks against U.S. shopping malls.[263] It also paid tribute to "Minnesotan Martyrs," Somali American al-Shabaab members who died in Somalia.[264]

AMISOM's mission and presence has continued to expand since 2007, leading to some operational success. AMISOM's mission of protecting the TFG quickly turned into combat operations.[265] By the time of Ethiopia's withdrawal in 2009, AMISOM comprised of 3,500 Ugandan and Burundian troops and would continue to grow in troop contributing countries (TCCs).[266] In 2011, AMISOM expelled al-Shabaab from Mogadishu, Kenya launched a major operation called Operation Linda Nchi, Ethiopia reentered Somalia to open an additional front, and AMISOM's mission expanded into stabilization.[267] By 2013, AMISOM's role again shifted to supporting African Union institutions tasked with stabilizing and reconstructing Somalia because AMISOM's presence had extended beyond Mogadishu and successful operations had expelled al-Shabaab from most key cities.[268]

Major coordinated AMISOM operations also began again in 2013. In 2013, in an attempt to break the stalemate with al-Shabaab, AMISOM conducted a surge from 17,731 to 22,126 personnel, with the strategy of developing the Somali National Security Forces

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261 James Miller, "Al Shabaab in East Africa," *American Enterprise Institute: Critical Threats Project*, July 24, 2014, http://www.criticalthreats.org/somalia/miller-al-shabaab-east-africa-july-24-2014; Jessica Hatcher and Kevin Sieff, "Al-Shabab Attacks Kenyan University, Killing at Least 147," *Washington Post*, April 2, 2015, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/70-killed-hundreds-rescued-after-kenya-university-attack-by-al-shabab-militants/2015/04/02/0c554516-d951-11e4-ba28-f2a685dc7f89_story.html?utm_term=.6730bfce8d25.

262 Miller, "Al Shabaab in East Africa."

263 "The Fight Against Al Shabaab" (CRS Report No. IN10432) (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2016), https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/IN10432.pdf.

264 Ibid.

265 Lotze, "The Surge to Stabilize," 3.

266 Ibid.

267 Ibid., 3, 4.

268 Ibid., 5.

(NSF) and Somali National Army (SNA) to lead in the fight against al-Shabaab.[269] AMISOM conducted two major operations in 2014, Operation Eagle in March and Operation Indian Ocean in August. Both operations allowed AMISOM and the NSF to regain 68% of al-Shabaab's controlled locations in the Bay, Bakool, Gedo, Hiraan, Lower and Middle Shabelle, and Lower Juba regions.[270] In November 2014, AMISOM began Operation Ocean Build, which sought to hold and build the gained territory from the two previous operations.[271] By July 2015, AMISOM's offensive operations resumed with Operation Juba Corridor that aimed to push al-Shabaab from its remaining strongholds.[272] As of this writing, Operation Juba Corridor is the last major operation conducted by AMISOM. Despite some AMISOM successes, al-Shabaab has proven resilient and adaptable. For instance, after al-Shabaab's territorial loses, they avoided direct contact with AMISOM and the NSF and adopted asymmetrical tactics to destabilize Somalia.[273]

The *National Strategy for Counterterrorism* admits that the United States and its interests and allies face a terrorist threat from East Africa but provides a less detailed plan to counter the terrorist threat in East Africa than it did against AQAP. The document generically states that the United States seeks to dismantle AQ elements in East Africa while "building the capacity of countries and local administrations to serve as countervailing forces" to AQ and causes of instability.[274] The document acknowledges that an AQ presence in al-Shabaab is a driving factor in al-Shabaab's insurgency in Somalia.[275] The document also recognizes that a root cause for al-Shabaab emanates from Somalia's unstable political and security environment, and, less optimistic than Yemen, admits the situation will likely persist well into the future.[276] This thesis seeks to explore

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[269] Lotze "The Surge to Stabilize," 8, 1.

[270] Ibid., 9; Paul D. Williams, "AMISOM Under Review," *The RUSI Journal* 161, no. 1 (2016), 41, doi: 10.1080/03071847.2016.1152120.

[271] Lotze "The Surge to Stabilize," 14.

[272] Ibid., 15.

[273] Ibid., 7.

[274] White House, *2015 National Security Strategy*, 14.

[275] White House, *2015 National Security Strategy*, 14.

[276] Ibid.

how the application of armed drone strikes in weak or failed states have interacted with other elements of national power to achieve the objectives outlined in the United States' CT strategy. Therefore, this case study will examine the period from 2011, the year of the first reported drone strike, until 2015, the year of the last major AMISOM operation.

B.   MILITARY

As with Yemen, drone strikes represent one tool of CT used in Somalia, and due to the classified nature of the operations, assessing the instrument remains difficult. Regardless, open source data exists that allow one to analyze other military efforts conducted in Somalia during drone strikes.

1.   Drone Strikes

Using data from non-profit organizations that track media reports of drone strikes reveal that drone strikes in Somalia began in 2011. Table 10 presents drone strike statistics from two reputable organizations. The data differs slightly between the two organizations, but the trend shows that, from 2012–2014, drone strikes averaged two to three per year and increased sharply in 2015.

Table 10. Drone Strike Statistics for Somalia, 2011–2015.[277]

Year	Drone Strikes	Total Killed	Suspected Militants Killed	Civilians Killed	Unknowns
The Center For the Study of Targeted Killing					
2011	8	19	4	15	0
2012	2	5	4	1	0
2013	1	2	2	0	0
2014	3	11	11	0	0
2015	8	28	28	0	0
The Bureau of Investigative Journalism					
2011	3	3	-	0	-
2012	2	6	-	1	-
2013	1	3	-	0	-
2014	3	14	-	2	-
2015	12	57	-	4	-

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[277] Adapted from "U.S. Attacks in Somalia," The Center for the Study of Targeted Killing, accessed February 11, 2017, http://www.targetedkilling.org/database/list; "U.S. Strikes in Somalia, 2007-Present," The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, accessed March 31, 2017, https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/ d/ 1LT5TVBMy1_Rj2WH30xQG9nqr8RXFVvzJE_47NlpeSY/edit#gid=859698683.

2. Security Cooperation

Operations in Somalia present a unique facet for security cooperation. Whereas the DOD had funding to support security cooperation in Yemen, the DOS primarily funds security cooperation in Somalia through an account known as Peacekeeping Operations (PKO), the primary channel for CT aid.[278] The PKO funds AMISOM, the SNA, and the NSF.[279] Figure 6 shows the requested PKO funds each year.
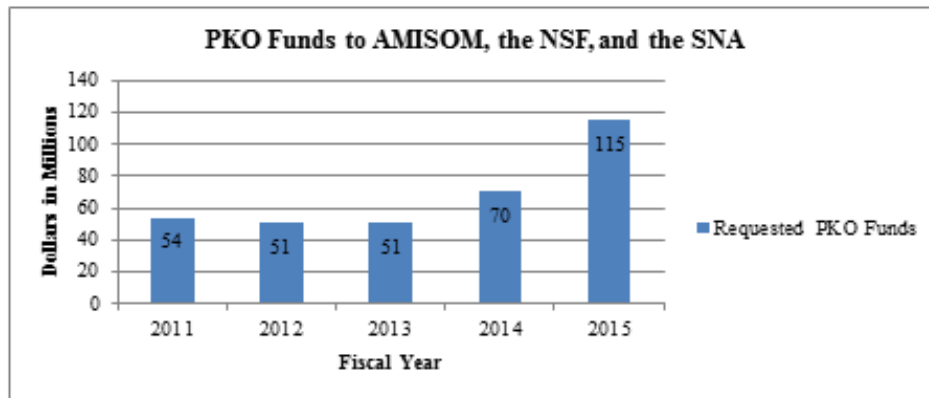

Figure 6. PKO Funds to AMISOM, the NSF, and the SNA, 2011–2015.[280]

The justifications for the PKO aid in Figure 6 suggest the funds contribute to a broader CT strategy rather than merely drone strikes. The 2011 budget request sought to fund the deployment of additional AMISOM battalions, force protection supplies, training, and equipment.[281] Compared to the year before the first drone strike, the 2010

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[278] Dagne, *Somalia*, 7.

[279] "Congressional Budget Justification Foreign Operations: Appendix 2, 2014," United States Department of State, accessed January 21, 2017, 143, https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/208291.pdf.

[280] Adapted from "Congressional Budget Justification Foreign Operations: Appendix 2, 2011," United States Department of State, accessed January 21, 2017, 162, https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/137936.pdf; "Congressional Budget Justification Foreign Operations: Appendix 2, 2012," United States Department of State, accessed January 21, 2017, 180, http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pcaac377.pdf; "Congressional Budget Justification Foreign Operations: Appendix 2, 2013," United States Department of State, accessed January 21, 2017, 172, https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/185014.pdf; "Congressional Budget Justification Foreign Operations: Appendix 2, 2014," 143; "Congressional Budget Justification Foreign Operations: Appendix 2, 2015," United States Department of State, accessed January 21, 2017, 142, https://www.state.gov/documents/ organization/ 224069.pdf.

[281] Department of State, "Congressional Budget Justification 2011," 164.

budget request of $67 million was more than the 2011 request, yet the 2010 request lacked the justification included in the 2011 request.[282] The 2011 request served as a base request for the subsequent requests, but each subsequent request added further justifications. For example, the 2012 report justified its request for the same measures as the 2011 request except added that it would fund more specific support to the NSF, such as advisors.[283] In 2013, the DOS requested funds for combat multipliers to assist AMISOM expanding its presence on the ground.[284] The 2014 budget dissected the request. AMISOM would receive $35 million for training, advisory support, logistics, and equipment, while $35 million would fund the NSF's training, logistics, support, and salaries.[285] The increase in funds from 2013 to 2014 coincides with an AMISOM surge that occurred in late 2013 in an attempt to break the stalemate with al-Shabaab.[286] The 2015 budget contains the same language as the 2014 budget but does not breakdown its $115 million request. Despite the 2010 request being more than the annual requests from 2011–2013, the requests during drone operations had deliberate justifications that changed and added reasons, showing that planners became conscious of where they devoted funding and searched for ways to improve AMISOM and NSF capabilities.

Table 11 shows a widely inconsistent amount of Somalis receiving U.S.-backed military training. The training included military vehicle driver lessons, leadership courses for officers and non-commissioned officers, radio instruction, and various tactical training courses.[287]

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[282] "FY 2010 Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations," United States Department of State, May 28, 2009, 150, https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/124072.pdf.

[283] Department of State, "Congressional Budget Justification 2012," 183.

[284] Department of State, "Congressional Budget Justification 2013," 174–75.

[285] Department of State, "Congressional Budget Justification 2014," 146.

[286] Lotze, "Surge to Stabilize," 8.

[287] "Somalia," Security Assistance Monitor, accessed March 5, 2017, http://securityassistance.org/data/country/trainee.

Table 11. U.S.-Trained Somali Military Personnel, 2011–2015.[288]

Year	Number of Somalis Trained
2011	16
2012	3
2013	1061
2014	1
2015	494

The table, nevertheless, does indicate the United States made a drastic increase in the amount of Somalis trained in 2013, which coincides with AMISOM's surge and indicates the increased training program synchronizes with a larger military strategy. The 2014 figure, however, indicates a major challenge in training Somalis occurred. Also, the increase in Somalis trained in 2015 coincides with increased drone strikes and AMISOM's major operation for the year.

The DOS supports military assistance to Somalia apart from PKO funds. For instance, the DOS provides Somalia funding through NADR, IMET and INCLE programs.[289] Table 12 shows the requested funds for Somalia and shows no clear pattern emerges in other security programs in relation to drone strikes, other than the DOS still made efforts in these areas.

Table 12. Other Security Programs for Somalia, 2011–2015.
Dollars in Millions.[290]

Program	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
IMET	$.04	-	-	$.2	$.2
INCLE	$2	$2	$1.8	$1.78	$1.7
NADR	-	$2	$1.8	-	$4.3
Total	$2.04	$4	$3.6	$1.98	$6.2

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[288] Adapted from Security Assistance Monitor, "Somalia."

[289] Department of State, "Congressional Budget Justification, 2011," 162.

[290] Adapted from Department of State, "Congressional Budget Justification, 2011," 162; "Department of State, "Congressional Budget Justification 2012," 180; Department of State, "Congressional Budget Justification 2013," 172; Department of State, "Congressional Budget Justification 2014," 143; Department of State, "Congressional Budget Justification 2015," 142.

3.   Analysis

It may be no coincidence that, as al-Shabaab reached its zenith in 2010, armed drone strikes began in 2011, and AMISOM's role in Somalia expanded in 2011. Military efforts seem to suggest that armed drones strikes interact with a broader strategy. Kenya and the NSF launched Operation Linda Nchi on October 14, 2011 in the Jubbada Hoose region south of Mogadishu.[291] Of the three drone strikes in 2011, only one occurred during the time of Operation Linda Nchi but in an area outside of the operation.[292] Therefore, it appears drone strikes did not correspond with the major AMISOM operation of 2011. The next major AMISOM operation occurred in 2014 when Ethiopia, the NSF, and AMISOM launched Operation Eagle in March. No U.S. drone strike occurred in Somalia during this time.[293] Likewise, no drone strikes occurred during Operation Indian Ocean, which began in August 2014. Operation Ocean Build started in November 2014 and continued until Operation Juba Corridor began in July 2015.[294] During Operation Ocean Build, drone strikes appear to assist AMISOM and the NSF in stabilizing their gains from Operation Indian Ocean. For instance, a drone strike killed an al-Shabaab leader in Saakow Somalia that the Pentagon said would impair al-Shabaab's ability to attack the NSF and AMISOM.[295] Also, drone strikes in January and March of 2015 killed senior al-Shabaab members in the Gedo region, territory that AMISOM had previously seized and, at the time, held as part of Operation Ocean Build.[296] Therefore, the Gedo drone strikes contributed to AMISOM's mission of holding the territory. An offensive, Operation Juba Corridor, began on July 19, 2015, and drone strikes also appear to

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[291] Seth G. Jones, Andrew Liepman, and Nathan Chandler, *Counterterrorism and Counterinsurgency in Somalia: Assessing the Campaign Against Al Shabaab* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2016), 23, http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1539.html.

[292] The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, "U.S. Strikes in Somalia, 2007-Present."

[293] The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, "U.S. Strikes in Somalia, 2007-Present."

[294] Lotze, "Surge to Stabilize," 9.

[295] "US Strike in Somalia 'Killed Al-Shabab Intelligence Chief," BBC News, last modified December 31, 2014, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-30635240?print=true.

[296] "US Drone Attack In Gedo Kills Al-Shabab Officials*," Goobjoog*, last modified March 13, 2015, http://goobjoog.com/english/us-drone-attack-in-gedo-kills-al-shabab-officials/.

coordinate with AMISOM and NSF movements.[297] For example, Somali media reported a drone strike on July 15, 2015 killed two senior members of al-Shabaab in the town of Baardheere, the same town that the NSF and AMISOM attacked only three days later.[298] The data shows that beginning with Operation Indian Ocean in August 2014, U.S. drone strikes in Somalia coordinate with AMISOM and NSF ground operations. This data indicates that drone operations did not directly synchronize with AMISOM operations from 2011–2013, but a degree of coordination began in 2014.

C.   DIPLOMATIC

An evolution in U.S. diplomacy to Somalia occurred from 2011–2015. Officially, the DOS repeatedly stated that, from 2011–15, the U.S. foreign policy objective sought to assist Somalia regain political and economic stability and alleviate the humanitarian crisis in the country.[299] The United States has routinely and publicly expressed support of the TFG while employing a dual-track policy in Somalia by dealing with sub-national entities in addition to the TFG.[300] One can conclude that issues arose in this dual-track approach, such as conflicts of interest with the different parties or a lack of a unity of effort from the United States. Washington changed its dual-track approach by 2013, but, ostensibly, waited for milestones to pass. For example, from 2011–12, the United States used diplomacy in supporting the Djibouti Peace Processes and supported ending the transitional Somali government.[301] As a result, in 2013, Washington, for the first time

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[297] "AMISOM's New Offensive Creates More Questions Than Answers," ISS Peace and Security Council Report, August 11, 2015, https://issafrica.org/pscreport/addis-insights/amisoms-new-offensive-creates-more-questions-than-answers; "Somali Government Claims Responsibility Over Drone Strike in Gedo," *Goobjoog*, last modified July 16, 2015, http://goobjoog.com/english/somali-government-claims-responsibility-over-drone-strike-in-gedo/.

[298] *Goobjoog*, "Somali Government Claims Responsibility."

[299] "U.S. Relations with Somalia," United States Department of State, accessed February 25, 2017, https://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2863.htm.

[300] "The U.S. Recognition of Somalia," Heritage Institute, March 2013, http://www.heritageinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/ 2013/06/HIPS_Policy_Brief_001-2013_ENGLISH.pdf.

[301] Department of State, "Congressional Budget Justification 2014," 143.

since 1991, recognized the Somali government and officially announced that its dual-track approach ended.[302]

After 2013, one notices that the United States applied more diplomacy with Somalia. With recognition of the government, the United States announced in 2014 it would appoint an ambassador to Somalia; prior to this, the United States only had a Special Representative to Somalia based in Kenya.[303] Also, the Obama Administration started a major initiative by announcing the Counterterrorism Partnership Fund in 2014, which sought to increase the security assistance Washington provides to Somalia and its neighbors.[304] Additionally, after a 23-year absence, the United States received a Somali Ambassador in 2014.[305] Furthermore, the official U.S. Mission to Somalia opened in 2015, based in Nairobi, Kenya.[306] Symbolically important, Secretary of State Kerry visited the Somali President in Mogadishu in 2015, the first visit of a top U.S. official since the early 1990s.[307]

The United States has supported Somalia develop its government institutions. The DOS devoted foreign aid to achieve its goals of enhancing good governance. The ESF fund to Somalia devotes a portion of the money to programs for democracy and governance. From 2011–2013, the DOS requested $8.5 million, $8.7 million, and $3 million, respectively, from the ESF toward the "Governing Justly and Democratically" program.[308] The DOS budget requests contain no data on the amount of money from the

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[302] Department of State, "Congressional Budget Justification 2014," 143; David Shinn, "U.S. 'Dual Track' Policy in Somalia," *The Official Blog of Amb. David H. Shinn* (blog), October 15, 2013, http://davidshinn.blogspot.com/2013/10/us-dual-track-policy-in-somalia.html.

[303] Viola Gienger, "Somalia Slated for First U.S. Ambassador in Two Decades," United States Institute for Peace, June 3, 2014, http://www.usip.org/publications/somalia-slated-first-us-ambassador-in-two-decades.

[304] Dagne, *Somalia*, 3.

[305] Department of State, "U.S. Relations with Somalia."

[306] Ibid.

[307] Rick Gladstone, "John Kerry Makes Unannounced Visit to Somalia," *New York Times*, March 5, 2015, https://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/06/world/africa/john-kerry-makes-unannounced-visit-to-somalia.html?_r=0.

[308] Department of State, "Congressional Budget Justification Foreign Operations: Appendix 2, 2011," 162; Department of State, "Congressional Budget Justification Foreign Operations: Appendix 2, 2012," 180; Department of State, "Congressional Budget Justification Foreign Operations: Appendix 2, 2013," 172.

ESF that went to governance and democracy programs from 2014–2015, although the reports have more detail on how it will use money for democracy and governance programs. Table 13 illustrates the DOS requests for the Somalia ESF.

Table 13. Economic Support Fund to Somalia, 2011–2015.
Dollars in Millions.[309]

Account	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015
ESF	$25.818	$25.821	$19.4	$49.4	$79.217

Table 13 shows a drastic increase in ESF funds for FY 2014 and FY 2015. Despite the reports not breaking down how much of the ESF funds will contribute to democracy and governance programs, one can expect an overall increase compared to 2011–2013.

1.   Analysis

In the time frame under analysis, diplomatic efforts appear to have increased as the United States employed drone strikes in Somalia. Three events in this timeframe likely forced Washington to increase its diplomacy efforts with Somalia. The first is drones strikes, which began in 2011. Second, the 2011 Somali famine reportedly killed over 250,000 Somalis and showed the U.S. lacked a coherent policy for the country.[310] For instance, U.S. CT laws prevented aid from reaching areas controlled by al-Shabaab and likely contributed to the scope of the disaster.[311] Finally, diplomacy increased during this timeframe because of the 2013 formation of a Somali government, presumably making it easier for the DOS to use diplomacy with Somalia.

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[309] Adapted from Department of State, "Congressional Budget Justification Foreign Operations: Appendix 2, 2011," 162; Department of State, "Congressional Budget Justification Foreign Operations: Appendix 2, 2012," 180; Department of State, "Congressional Budget Justification Foreign Operations: Appendix 2, 2013," 172; Department of State, "Congressional Budget Justification Foreign Operations: Appendix 2, 2014," 143; Department of State, "Congressional Budget Justification Foreign Operations: Appendix 2, 2015," 142.

[310] Bronwyn E. Bruton and Paul D. Williams, *Counterinsurgency in Somalia: Lessons Learned from the Africa Union Mission in Somalia, 2007–2013* (JSOU Report 14–5) (MacDill AFB: Joint Special Operations University, 2014), 76.

[311] Robin Dixon, "U.S. Policy Seen as Factor in Somalia Famine Deaths," *Los Angeles Times*, March 2, 2013, http://articles.latimes.com/2013/may/02/world/la-fg-somalia-famine-20130503.

D.   ECONOMIC

The United States has used its economic tool in different ways in Somalia to fight al-Shabaab and strengthen Somali society. Washington effectively uses the "Rewards for Justice" program against al-Shabaab. In June 2012, the DOS added seven al-Shabaab leaders to the program, with al-Shabaab cofounder, Ahmed Abdi Aw Mohamed, having the highest bounty from the group.[312] In 2015, the DOS announced rewards totaling $27 million for the top six commanders of al-Shabaab.[313] Washington also targeted al-Shabaab's finances. President Obama signed Executive Order 13620 on July 20, 2012, which provides sanctions on charcoal exported from Somalia because it lavishly funded al-Shabaab.[314]

The United States has had uneven trade with Somalia because of the country's fragile nature. For instance, Somalia consistently has a trade imbalance, meaning its imports exceed its exports.[315] From 2011–2015, Table 14 illustrates U.S. exports to Somalia increased. When compared to U.S. trade during 2005–2010 in Table 15, one can see U.S. exports were on average higher during 2006–2008.

Table 14.   U.S. Trade with Somalia, 2011–2015. Dollars in Millions.[316]

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total Exports	$6.1	$16.7	$16	$35.7	$45
Total Imports	$1.1	$1	$1.2	$.5	$.9
Balance	5	15.8	14.8	35.1	44.1

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[312] Bill Roggio, "7 Shabaab Leaders Added to Rewards for Justice Most Wanted List," Long War Journal, June 7, 2012, http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2012/06/7_shabaab_leaders_ad.php.

[313] "U.S. Offers $27 Million in Rewards for Information on al-Shabaab Commanders," *Reuters*, last modified November 11, 2015, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-somalia-usa-idUSKCN0T01WC20151111.

[314] "Somalia Sanctions Program," United States Office of Foreign Assets Control, October 3, 2014, https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/somalia.pdf.

[315] "Somalia," Observatory of Economic Complexity, accessed February 25, 2017, http://atlas.media.mit.edu/en/profile/country/som/.

[316] Adapted from "Trade in Goods with Somalia," United States Census Bureau, accessed February 25, 2017, https://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c7700.html.

Table 15. U.S. Trade with Somalia, 2006–2010. Dollars in Millions.[317]

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Total Exports	$19.9	$20.7	$64.3	$4.1	$1.5
Total Imports	$.4	$.2	$.2	$.3	$.1
Balance	19.6	20.5	64.1	3.8	1.3

Regardless, Table 14 shows that imports, what will strengthen Somalia's economy, became significantly higher starting in the year of the first drone strike, though slightly dipping in 2014. The noticeable increase in imports coincides with the start of the drone campaign.

The United States also provides economic aid to Somalia. For economic assistance, USAID devoted funds primarily through the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), the FFP, and the DOS's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM). Table 16 depicts that U.S. economic aid to Somalia increased from 2011–2015. In 2010, the year prior to the first drone strike, the United States spent $31.667 million in total USAID funds in Somalia.[318] In 2011, USAID increased funds by over $100 million; the deadly 2011 famine likely contributed to this stark increase in aid. Regardless, Table 16 shows that aid never declined below $135 million and only increased.

Table 16. U.S. Economic Aid to Somalia, 2011–2015. Dollars in Millions.[319]

Account	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015
OFDA	$46.620	$37.039	$45.261	$45.678	$52.028
FFP	$88.628	$161.830	$77.085	$102.526	$113.026
PRM	$0	$0	$12.8	$27.3	$39.1
Total	$135.248	$198.869	$135.146	$175.504	$204.154

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[317] Adapted from United States Census Bureau, "Trade in Goods with Somalia."

[318] "Somalia—Complex Emergency: 01–24-2011 Fact Sheet #1," United States Agency for International Development, January 24, 2011, https://2001-2009.state.gov/documents/organization/102511.pdf.

[319]Adapted from "Horn of Africa—Drought Fact Sheet," United States Agency for International Development, September 11, 2012, https://www.usaid.gov/crisis/somalia/somalia-disaster-response-archive; "Somalia—Complex Emergency: 09–30-2013 Fact Sheet #2," United States Agency for International Development, September 30, 2013, https://www.usaid.gov/crisis/somalia/somalia-disaster-response-archive; "Somalia—Complex Emergency: 09–30-2014 Fact Sheet #4," United States Agency for International Development, September 30, 2014, https://www.usaid.gov/crisis/somalia/somalia-disaster-response-archive; "Somalia—Complex Emergency: 09–30-2015 Fact Sheet #5," United States Agency for International Development, September 30, 2015, https://www.usaid.gov/crisis/somalia/somalia-disaster-response-archive.

One cannot ignore that the drastic and sustained increase in aid coincides with the United States' steady drone campaign. Also, implementing PRM funds in FY2013 shows that the United States attempted a more complete aid effort. In 2015, USAID started a $75 million economic growth program called Growth, Enterprise, Employment, and Livelihoods (GEEL) in Somalia. This five-year program aims to build the capacity in Somalia to make it attractive for investment.[320] Apart from providing aid to the Somali in need, which Table 16 demonstrates, GEEL reveals a U.S. commitment in improving the economic capacity of Somalia, thus attacking a root problem of terrorism.

1.   Analysis

Unlike Yemen in Chapter III, where USAID listed provinces that received aid and shows a positive correlation between drone strikes and the amount of USAID projects in the regions the strikes occurred, USAID does not list any provinces in south-central Somalia that receive aid. Rather, USAID states that it provides funds countrywide. USAID's 2015 "Somalia—Complex Emergency: 09–30-2015 Fact Sheet #5" does mention a 2015 vaccination campaign in town of Baardheere in the Gedo province, Baardheere's first health project since 2009.[321] Coincidently, three out of the eight drone strikes in 2015, occurred in Baardheere.[322] The vaccination campaign came to Baardheere almost two-and-a-half months after the town's last drone strike and about a month after AMISOM had liberated the town from al-Shabaab.[323] Clearly, Baardheere demonstrates the use and coordination between multiple instruments of national power. For example, the drone strikes in Baardheere supported AMISOM offensive operations, which required a level of complex coordination, and economic aid subsequently and

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[320] "Somalia Overview," United States Agency for International Development, last modified January 23, 2017, https://www.usaid.gov/documents/1860/somalia-overview.

[321] United States Agency for International Development, "Somalia—Complex Emergency: 09–30-2015 Fact Sheet #5."

[322] The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, "U.S. Strikes in Somalia, 2007-Present."

[323] "Polio Vaccinators Come to Bardhere," Radio Ergo, last modified September 22, 2015, https://www.radioergo.org/en/blog.php?article_id=1788; "AMISOM and Somali Forces Take Major Towns from al-Shabaab—What's Next?" *Somalia Newsroom*, last modified July 27, 2015, https://somalianewsroom.com/2015/07/27/amisom-and-somali-forces-take-major-towns-from-al-shabaab-whats-next/.

promptly went to a town recently secured by AMISOM, which also helps the information instrument. Although this example may be an outlier, it demonstrates that drone strikes in Somalia contributed to a comprehensive plan in 2015. Overall, U.S. sanctions, Rewards for Justice, U.S. trade, and U.S. aid to Somalia show the United States increased its economic instrument as it commenced a regular drone campaign in the country beginning in 2011.

E.   INFORMATION

Applying the information instrument against al-Shabaab is complicated. Al-Shabaab, like most terrorist organizations, employs sophisticated information operations. For instance, al-Shabaab has its own media branch, the "al-Katiab Foundation for Media Productions," which regularly releases well-crafted videos and messages online, and they effectively use radio broadcasts throughout Somalia to spread their message.[324] The other instruments of national power permeate into information, but the United States has made deliberate efforts in the information realm.

The BBG makes efforts directed at Somalis. The BBG's annual reports include its efforts in Somalia. Also, the DOS's *Country Report on Terrorism* highlights the BBG's outreach to foreign Muslim audiences and includes some information not mentioned in the BBG's yearly reports. Radio broadcasting in Somalia appears as a critical medium to apply information. A 2013 BBG survey found that radio is the most popular way for Somalis to obtain information.[325] In 2011, the BBG reported that it saw one of its highest listening rates ever in Somalia.[326] The 2011 *Country Report on Terrorism* stated that Voice of America (VOA) was the most popular radio program in Somaliland and Puntland.[327] VOA supported diplomatic efforts as well. In 2012, VOA assisted the

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[324] Seth Jones, "Counterterrorism and Counterinsurgency in Somalia," 35.

[325] "Media Usage in Somalia 2013," Broadcasting Board of Governors, 2013, https://www.bbg.gov/wp-content/media/2013/11/gallup-somalia-brief.pdf.

[326] "Broadcasting Board of Governors 2011 Annual Report," Broadcasting Board of Governors, accessed February 25, 2017, 25, https://www.bbg.gov/wp-content/media/2016/06/annual-report__2011__part1.pdf.

[327] "Chapter 5: Terrorist Safe Havens (Update to 7120 Report) 5.1.a-5.1.8. Strategies, Tactics and Tools for Disrupting or Eliminating Safe Havens," *Department of State 2011 Country Reports on Terrorism*, July 31, 2012, https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2011/195549.htm.

Somali government officials conduct a survey to find out what Somali's wanted in their constitution and government.[328] By 2013, one can see a shift by VOA making more deliberate efforts against al-Shabaab. In 2013, the BBG reported that Somalia was the third country with the highest percentage of its population reached by VOA.[329] The BBG also stated that in 2013 VOA sought to counter extremist propaganda that targets youth in Somalia by broadcasting candid live-air and online discussions on extremism.[330] Likewise, the BBG announced that VOA launched its first Somali television program, *Qubanaha*, a news program in 2013.[331] In 2014, BBG reported on its efforts to counter al-Shabaab in the Horn of Africa. For example, VOA reporters embedded with AMISOM forces for operations in 2014, and VOA conducted two town hall meetings in Mogadishu concerning child soldiers and human trafficking.[332] In 2015, the BBG reported that its programing targeted violent extremism in Somalia by offering alternatives to extremist messaging, and it also reported VOA expanded its access to Somali television networks.[333] The 2015 *Country Report on Terrorism* stated that VOA programs included an interview with a former al-Shabaab commander, an original program that targets Somali youth, and one of its news programs, "Islamic Affairs," expanded its audience and included topics where Islamic scholars address causes of Islamic extremism.[334] The efforts by VOA demonstrate that the United States made an effort to increase its information power in Somalia, and the programming in 2015 targeted the potential al-Shabaab recruit.

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[328] "Broadcasting Board of Governors 2012 Annual Report," Broadcasting Board of Governors, accessed February 25, 2017, 23, https://www.bbg.gov/wp-content/media/2016/06/annual-report__2012.pdf.

[329] "Broadcasting Board of Governors 2013 Annual Report," Broadcasting Board of Governors, accessed February 25, 2017, 9, https://www.bbg.gov/wp-content/media/2016/06/annual-report__2013.pdf.

[330] Broadcasting Board of Governors, "Broadcasting Board of Governors 2013 Annual Report," 9.

[331] Ibid., 37.

[332] "Broadcasting Board of Governors 2014 Annual Report," Broadcasting Board of Governors, accessed February 25, 2017, 21, https://www.bbg.gov/wp-content/media/2016/06/annual-report__2014.pdf.

[333] "Fiscal Year 2015 Performance and Accountability Report," Broadcasting Board of Governors, accessed February 25, 2017, 65, 74, https://www.bbg.gov/wp-content/media/2015/11/BBG-FY2015-PAR.pdf.

[334] "Chapter 5: Terrorist Safe Havens (Update to 7120 Report) 5.1.a-5.1.8. Strategies, Tactics and Tools for Disrupting or Eliminating Safe Havens," *Department of State 2015 Country Reports on Terrorism*, June 2, 2016, https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2015/index.htm.

DOS press releases concerning Somalia show an increase from 2011–2015. Most press releases included official U.S. statements concerning piracy, condemning al-Shabaab terrorist attacks, or comments on the political process for Somalia. For instance, in 2011, the DOS had five press releases concerning Somalia and the number increased to 11 by 2015, with 2013 standing out as an anomaly by having zero.[335] Somali students studying in the United States remained relatively the same during the time span. From 2011–2015, Somali students who studied in the United States averaged around 29, with a significant decrease of 15 in 2014.[336] The increase of press releases demonstrates an increase in an information effort, yet no push can be concluded on the number of students.

The CSCC boasted of a more comprehensive strategy for Somalia. For instance, in a 2011 hearing to Congress, the CSCC reported its strategy for countering al-Shabaab combined programs from the U.S. Embassy in Kenya, USAID, DOS's CT bureau, non-governmental organization (NGO) community, and DOD; it claimed this approach promotes an efficient use of each entities' capabilities.[337] The CSCC also stated in 2009 that it had its own Somali-language Facebook page, and it had two Somali speakers on its staff to counter al-Shabaab messaging.[338]

1.   Analysis

VOA Somali clearly exhibits that the United States applies its information effort in Somalia. VOA Somali is a radio program specifically tailored to Somali speakers in the Horn of Africa and some of its programing deliberately discredits al-Shabaab. The 2013 launch of the television program *Qubanaha* also shows that the United States expanded its information instrument as drone strikes became routine in Somalia. Furthermore, VOA embedding its reporters with AMISOM in 2014 demonstrates how information and the military instrument can complement each other. Conversely, the

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[335] "Press Releases," Department of State, accessed February 25, 2017, https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2014/index.htm.

[336] Institute of International Education, "International Students: All Places of Origin."

[337] Fernandez, *State Department's Center For Strategic Counterterrorism Communications*.

[338] Counter Extremism, "Digital Outreach Team."

DOT's efforts to counter al-Shabaab appear insufficient. In Somalia itself, where the average Internet user per 100 people averaged 1.5 Somalis during 2011–2015, DOT staff could likely have more influence because of the low amount of Internet users.[339] Al-Shabaab's media wing, however, targets recruits from not only within Somalia but from the massive Somali diaspora in the Horn of Africa and abroad, where, particularly in the United States and Europe, Internet access is significantly higher than in Somalia. Therefore, the two Somali speakers on the DOT staff seem insufficient to contest the information space against al-Shabaab's media wing.

F.   SUMMARY

After analyzing the background on Somalia, one can see how the country became vulnerable to terrorist organizations. Likewise, a misguided U.S. policy of backing warlords and a dual-track diplomacy method likely led to more instability in Somalia that gave rise to al-Shabaab. The research also revealed that the U.S.-assisted AMISOM conducts short periods of successful offensive operations, followed by longer phases of stability operations that lead to a stalemate with al-Shabaab. After al-Shabaab reached its pinnacle in 2010, the United States began drone strikes in 2011, likely to contain al-Shabaab and buy some space for AMISOM.

From 2011–2015, the chapter showed that as the United States conducted drone strikes in Somalia it also applied its other instruments of national power, and, particularly by 2014, the other instruments seemed to interact more with drone strikes. Therefore, drone strikes in Somalia did not represent a tactic replacing a strategy. In fact, with drone strikes, the other instruments increased drastically, although additional factors likewise contributed to the increase, such as the lack of a coherent U.S. policy during the deadly 2011 famine and the formation of the Somali government in 2013. The drone strikes that occurred in Bardheere in 2015 that preceded AMISOM military actions and a UN vaccination campaign demonstrate a comprehensive use of all instruments of national power. The data in this chapter supports the first hypothesis: armed drone strikes, in

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[339] "Somali: Internet Users Per 100 people," The World Bank, accessed February 25, 2017, http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IT.NET.USER.P2.

conjunction with other instruments of U.S. national power, account for successful counterterrorism operations in a country. Conversely, the evidence here could support the second hypothesis: other instruments of national power aid armed drone operations but, as a grand strategy, have failed against terrorist organizations in the country.

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V.   COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

> The war of narratives has become even more important than the war of navies, napalm, and knives.
>
> —Omar Harammi, an American-born al-Shabaab member.[340]

The cases show similarities between U.S. drone strikes in Yemen and Somalia, yet both cases reveal differences as well. The U.S. drone strikes and raids that occurred within each border represent the obvious parallel, yet Yemen has had far more drone strikes than Somalia. Both countries have also experienced state collapse, refugee crises, famine, terrorist attacks, and insurgencies. The important similarity that likely underscores the litany of problems each country faces has to do with the weak to absent governance from center, which perpetuates the alternative forms of governance: tribalism and AQAP in Yemen, and clannism and al-Shabaab in Somalia. Therefore, both cases display primary challenges that the United States faces in fragile states. Yemen and Somalia share another similarity by having neighbors and foreign powers that both interfere within its borders: the United States, Saudi Arabia, and the GCC in Yemen; and the United States, Ethiopia, Kenya, and AMISOM in Somalia.

AQAP and al-Shabaab likewise share similarities as terrorist organizations that threaten the country, region, and United States. Both groups are AQ affiliates that: swear allegiance to AQ central, qualify as an insurgency, practice extreme Salafi rule in the territory they control, seek to establish an Islamic emirate, and have proficient propaganda units that attract foreign supporters. Both have conducted terrorist attacks in their respected regions as well.[341] Although both groups encourage followers to attack targets within the United States, only AQAP has physically attempted to target the U.S. homeland directly.

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[340] Simon Cottee, "Why It's So Hard to Stop ISIS Propaganda," *The Atlantic*, March 2, 2015, https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/03/why-its-so-hard-to-stop-isis-propaganda/386216/.

[341] Johnsen, *The Last Refuge,* 248–250. In August, 2009, AQAP conducted a bold and intricate assassination attempt in Saudi Arabia against Prince Nayef bin Abdul Aziz.

The conditions on the ground and U.S. activities at the time of the groups' emergence show a striking difference between the two cases. In Yemen, AQAP announced its formation in 2009. Prior to this, the United States had only conducted one drone strike in Yemen seven years prior, and no other direct U.S. military operation had occurred in Yemen.[342] Whereas, the United States declared al-Shabaab a terrorist organization in February 2008, yet TBIJ reports that four U.S. air strikes and JSOC raids happened in 2007.[343] Additionally, U.S. indirect involvement began in Somalia in 2003 with support to the warlord Qanyare, who many Somalis perceived as having sponsorship from Washington, and the United States publicly supported the warlord-ran ARPC in 2006.[344] U.S. military actions and dual-track diplomacy of supporting warlords contributed to the rise al-Shabaab before the United States conducted its first drone strike in Somalia, while no direct military actions occurred in Yemen for seven years before AQAP announced its formation.

This thesis explored how U.S. drone strikes in countries have interacted with the instruments of national power to achieve U.S. CT strategy. Evaluating how the United States applied the other instruments of national power during its drone campaigns in Yemen and Somalia shows an increased interaction in the other instruments of national power.

A.   INSTRUMENT OF POWER: MILITARY

Both case studies demonstrate that drone strikes were only one part of the U.S. military instrument of power. Moreover, once drone strikes occurred, it appears a more comprehensive military strategy began in both countries. The case studies showed not only a drastic increase in military aid money once drone strikes began but that more qualitative military aid also started. For instance, even some of the earliest drone strikes

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[342] "U.S. Strikes in Yemen, 2002-Present," The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, accessed March 31, 2017, https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1lb1hEYJomI8lSe33izwS2a2lbiygs0hTp2AlKz5KQ/edit#gid=492674230.

[343] "U.S. Strikes in Somalia, 2007-Present," The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, accessed March 31, 2017, https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1LT5TVBMy1Rj2WH30xQG9nqr8RXFVvzJE47NlpeSY/edit#gid=859698683.

[344] Scahill, *Dirty Wars*, 192–93.

in Yemen in 2010 had RoYG forces exploit the scene for DNA afterward.[345] Also, as Chapter III presented, following Yemen's Arab Spring, U.S. drone strikes appeared to support RoYG force's maneuver against AQAP, revealing that the U.S. drone campaign evolved from strikes against isolated targets to strikes that supported ground maneuver to seize territory. The same scenario occurred in Somalia from 2011–2015. At first, drone strikes appeared to occur in isolated events without AMISOM or NSF coordination but then transitioned to directly supporting AMISOM and NSF ground operations. The U.S. military aid money for both countries sought to enhance the ground force's capabilities, and, considering that the drone strikes occurred in synchronization with ground maneuver, indicate the military aid money had some effect on the ground force's abilities. Finally, Somalia and Yemen have demonstrated the value in the precision that armed drones offer, as opposed to other platforms, such as manned aircraft or cruise missiles from U.S. ships that both resulted in the markedly high CIVCAS in Somalia from 2007–2009 and in Yemen in 2009.[346]

B.   INSTRUMENT OF POWER: DIPLOMATIC

The diplomatic instrument remained not only the most difficult but also the most essential instrument for the United States to apply in both countries. The United States needs to encourage the diplomatic initiative of tribal and clan reconciliation in the Somali and Yemen governments, but, at the same time, drone strikes present a delicate situation for the United States that could undermine such efforts. Both in Somali clannism and Yemeni tribalism, *diyah*—blood compensation—exists and provides a layer of complexity to CT operations.[347] *Diyah* contributes to a seemingly endless cycle of violence: first, a drone strike kills an al-Shabaab or AQAP member; next, the victim's fellow tribesmen/clansmen launch an attack on RoYG/AMISOM/Somali government

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[345] "Yemen: Reported U.S. covert actions 2001–2011: YEM009 March 14 2010," The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, accessed February 15, 2017, https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/drone-war/data/yemen-reported-us-covert-actions-2001-2011.

[346] The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, "U.S. Strikes in Yemen, 2002-Present"; The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, "U.S. Strikes in Somalia, 2007-Present."

[347] Lewis, *A Modern History of the Somalia*, 11; Shelagh Wier, *A Tribal Order: Politics and Law in the Mountains of Yemen* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2007), 210.

forces or infrastructure; then, the RoYG/AMISOM/Somali government launch an operation in response to the latest attack that results in more AQAP/al-Shabaab deaths; and, consequently, the cycle repeats itself. Only diplomacy can break the cycle. For instance, the United States allegedly paid $800,000 to a Yemeni tribe after a botched December 2013 drone strike killed twelve innocent men.[348] Therefore, in U.S. drone operations, diplomacy remains critical in addressing structural issues and cultural factors.

In both countries, each government has legitimacy problems because of pervasive corruption and the inability to exert authority to the peripheries. Yemen's revolution, which deposed President Saleh, affected the U.S. diplomatic approach. Fortunately, President Hadi became a more effective and proactive CT partner for the United States, but the relationship became strained in 2014 after the Houthi's advance. In Yemen, the United States coordinated CT operations with the RoYG and avoided operating unilaterally or through any other entity within the country, hence no CT activity from 2002–2009. In Somalia, the United States had the latitude to conduct unilateral strikes and coordinate with subnational players because of the TFG's weak governing body. Ostensibly, this approach stopped in 2013 because earlier U.S. support to subnational entities, such as warlords, led to the emergence of al-Shabaab. Somalia and Yemen present a dilemma for the United States concerning failed states: work through a corrupt government or through the local strongmen. By the United States working through various local strongmen, as the CIA did in 2003-2007, it created higher levels of instability and the rise of al-Shabaab. On the other hand, one could argue that the United States working through a government still resulted in AQAP emerging in Yemen. Regardless, one cannot conclude that working through Yemeni tribes rather than the RoYG would have offered a better solution because one can determine that working with the warlords in Somalia directly enabled the rise of al-Shabaab. As a result, Somalia has demonstrated the importance of the United States to work with some sort of recognized government in failed states rather than local strongmen.

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[348] Johnsen, "Nothing Says 'Sorry Our Drones Hit Your Wedding Party.'"

Yemen's and Somalia's governments support the use of drone strikes. President Hadi has publicly stated in 2012 that he personally approves all U.S. drone strikes in Yemen, and the Somali Government routinely and promptly releases statements after U.S. drone strikes in Somalia.[349] Supporting drone strikes assists a weak government in appearing strong because it shows the populace that the local government can indirectly employ a deadly weapons platform and, by allowing the United States to conduct drone strikes, that the government has a degree of leverage over the United States. Having the local government support the strikes also provides the United States with more legitimacy, as opposed to the view that the U.S. government operates with impunity and conducts drone strikes wherever and whenever it wants. For both countries, when drone strikes started, the United States provided more diplomatic assistance, indicating that the United States made an effort to improve the governance of each country.

C.   INSTRUMENT OF POWER: ECONOMIC

Both countries are extremely poor, and the United States spent funds to improve the lives of the average Somali and Yemeni. Also, each country experienced an increase in economic aid that occurred simultaneously as drone operations began. Chapters III and IV showed that the United States used an array of economic tactics to improve each country and avoided economic exploitation of the limited resources each country has. The chapters also indicated that Somalia receives far more economic aid from the United States than Yemen, and, compared to Somalia, Yemen at least has limited amounts of oil that, if used properly, can improve its situation. As Table 9 indicated, the United States targeted the majority of its economic aid to regions in Yemen that experienced drone strikes and had the strongest presence of AQAP. The data on Somalia from USAID does not reveal the same conclusion, likely, because of the security and governance of Somalia compared to Yemen. Yemen's security, although not permissive, and governance, still very weak, were both better than Somalia's, which results in USAID's ability to sponsor projects in Yemen in the areas where drone strikes occur.

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[349] Bergen, "Decade of the Drone," 27; "Somalia: Reported U.S. Covert Actions 2001–2016," The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, accessed March 12, 2017, https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/drone-war/data/somalia-reported-us-covert-actions-2001-2017. Examining the Bureau's data sheet, one can see the Somali Government's routine reporting after a drone strike.

D.   INSTRUMENT OF POWER: INFORMATION

The United States faces an uphill fight in information against AQAP and al-Shabaab. Both terrorist organizations have adept media wings that target and successfully influence some American citizens to either join the organizations or conduct attacks in the United States.[350] In Somalia, the United States applied the information instrument more effectively than in Yemen. For example, VOA Somali directly targets a Somali audience, receives a favorable view from Somalis as a news source, and broadcasts anti-al-Shabaab programming;[351] whereas, the VOA has no Yemeni specific channel. Instead, VOA has a regional channel, Radio Sawa, which broadcasts regional news as opposed to Yemen specific news. Additionally, Radio Sawa has received a large amount of criticism in its public diplomacy approach. Formed in 2002, Radio Sawa sought to win over the youth of the Middle East by airing an increase of popular music from the West and East.[352] Radio Sawa's predecessor, VOA Arabic had a more favorable reception than Radio Sawa because VOA Arabic had less emphasis on music and focused on educational and cultural programs.[353] Radio Sawa cannot exactly compare as an effective information tool in Yemen because VOA Somali is tailored for Somalia and focuses on Somali issues. Although radio in Yemen is not as popular of an information medium as it is in Somalia, rural Yemenis still use it.[354] In the fight against AQAP, the United States has missed the mark in radiobroadcasting in Yemen.

The U.S. information effort also falls short for both countries by lacking a competing narrative to promulgate in the cyber realm. The United States at least makes an attempt with the CSCC in the "war of narratives" in both countries. Regardless of the CSCC being undermanned in the Somali and Arabic speaking DOT, the CSCC and U.S.

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[350] Johnsen, *The Last Refuge*, 261. AQAP member Anwar al-Awlaki inspired U.S. Army Major Nidal Hassan to attack and kill thirteen U.S. soldiers in Ft. Hood, Texas on November 5, 2009.

[351] Broadcasting Board of Governors, "Broadcasting Board of Governors 2014 Annual Report."

[352] Laurie Kassman, "Voice of America Versus Radio Sawa in the Middle East: A Personal Perspective," Arab Media & Society, March 21, 2007, http://www.arabmediasociety.com/?article=184.

[353] Ibid.

[354] "Yemen: Media and Telecommunication Landscape, February 2012," Relief Web, February 21, 2012, 17, http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Yemen%20media%20and%20telecoms%20landscape%20guide%20%20120212.pdf.

government still lacks a competing narrative. CSCC coordinator Alberto Fernandez acknowledged that the United States needs a counter-message for ISIS's narrative, which he states has "an appeal to violence, obviously, but there is also an appeal to the best in people, to people's aspirations, hopes and dreams, to their deepest yearnings for identity, faith, and self-actualization."[355] If the CSCC does not have a counter-narrative for the terrorist organization that remains the focus of U.S. actions, the CSCC likely lacks a counter-narrative for al-Shabaab and AQAP because both organizations have similar goals as ISIS and likewise attract foreign fighters. Apart from missing a narrative, the CSCC's tactics leave more to be desired. For instance, in a Congressional hearing, Fernandez reported that the CSCC avoids terrorist organizations' English language social media accounts, such as Twitter, and only focuses on accounts in vernacular languages, including Arabic and Somali.[356] Fernandez described English language propaganda as a law enforcement issue and outside the scope of his organization.[357] Since English language sites, which both AQAP and al-Shabaab use, fall outside the purview of the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communication, it shows a lack of a comprehensive authority to counter terrorist organizations' messages.

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[355] Cottee, "Why It's So Hard to Stop ISIS Propaganda."

[356] Fernandez, *State Department's Center For Strategic Counterterrorism Communications*.

[357] Ibid.

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VI.   CONCLUSION

The use of armed drones has become a preferred tool in U.S. CT operations. Under the Obama Administration, from January 20, 2009 to January 20, 2016, TBIJ reports that the United States conducted at least 373 drone strikes in Pakistan and 143 strikes in Yemen.[358] The amount of daily strike in Yemen peaked at four under the Obama Administration, which occurred during the RoYG army's push to expel AQAP from Abyan province in 2012.[359] The Trump Administration has also embraced armed drone operations and has drastically overtaken the Obama Administration's culmination of daily Yemen strikes. From March 2–3, 2017, the DOD announced it had launched more than 30 precision strikes in Yemen,[360] likely a mixture of drones and manned-aircraft. Although the Trump Administration will likely not sustain the levels seen in March 2017 in Yemen, the numbers indicate that the United States will continue armed drone campaigns and may expand strikes into new areas.

Since armed drone strikes will likely remain part of the U.S. CT strategy, the purpose of this thesis has been to explore how the application of armed drone strikes in weak or failed states have interacted with other elements of national power to achieve the objectives outlined in the United States' CT strategy. Many critics posit that the U.S. CT strategy relies too heavily on armed drone strikes, but that argument often fails to include other tactics the United States concurrently conducts. Consequently, armed drone strikes receive an undue amount of criticism without identifying gaps in the overall U.S. strategy for a country. Any attempt to improve U.S. CT strategy must examine what the United States conducted in weak or failed states in terms of: diplomatic, information, military—other than drone strikes, and economic instruments of national power. Results measure

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[358] The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, "CIA and U.S. Military Drone Strikes in Pakistan, from 2004 to Present"; The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, "US Drone Strikes in Yemen, 2002 to Present."

[359] Jessica Purkiss and Jack Serle, "Unprecedented Number of U.S. Drone and Air Strike Hit Yemen," The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, March 2, 2017, https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/stories/2017–03-02/unprecedented-number-of-us-drone-and-air-strikes-hit-yemen.

[360] Lisa Ferdinando, "U.S. conducts Second Day of Strikes Against Terrorist in Yemen," U.S. Central Command, March 3, 2017, http://www.centcom.mil/MEDIA/NEWS-ARTICLES/News-Article-View/Article/1103200/us-conducts-second-day-of-strikes-against-terrorists-in-yemen/.

success, not effort. Therefore, even if armed drones strikes interact with other elements of national power, achievement of U.S. objectives will determine success.

The United States maintains objectives in combating terrorist organizations and pushes a whole-of-government approach. The 2015 NSS establishes the goal of meeting the threat posed by AQ and its affiliates.[361] To achieve this goal, the strategy advocates assisting states that terrorist organizations use as safe havens to become more capable of governance and security.[362] The 2011 NSCT specifies a whole-of-government approach in CT.[363] Also, the DOS's strategy in its QDDR addresses the NSS's goals and states that the DOS leads the efforts of all U.S. government agencies' activities in a given country,[364] putting diplomacy first rather than military might. Additionally, the 2015 QDDR stresses economic growth to deny terrorist organizations safe havens in failed states and reiterates the DOS will conduct tailored strategies to address the root causes of terrorism in given countries.[365] The U.S. strategy for strategic communications declares that the United States will work to disrupt AQ's messaging via the DOS, DOD, and CSCC,[366] indicating a holistic method in CT. The DOD had specific goals against VEOs to eventually defeat them, to include: disrupting VEO planning, degrading support structures, removing leadership, interdicting finances, and liberating captured territory.[367] The DOD also recognizes the need for all elements of national power to defeat VEOs and to work through local partners.[368] Also, all strategies find countering terrorist organizations messaging as an essential part of CT. Analyzing the various strategies from the U.S. government organizations that employ the U.S. instruments of national power demonstrate that they all aim to accomplish the president's goals.

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[361] White House, 2015 *National Security Strategy*, 7, 10.

[362] Ibid., 9

[363] White House, *National Strategy for Counterterrorism, 3*.

[364] Department of State, *2010 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review*, vii.

[365] Department of State, *2015 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review*, 26.

[366] White House, *National Framework for Strategic Communication, 7–9*.

[367] Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2015 *National Military Strategy*, 5.

[368] Ibid., 8.

A.   YEMEN

This thesis's analysis of 2009–2013 in Yemen shows that U.S. drone strikes positively interacted with other instruments of national power. For instance, drone strikes in Yemen began in 2010, and the data reveals that the United States increased its military instrument by providing significantly more aid to develop the RoYG's military and CT capabilities than it had before drone strikes began. Also, drone strikes supported the RoYG army's maneuver to regain the ground from AQAP after the organization exploited Yemen's 2011 Revolution to seize the greatest expanse of territory it had yet obtained.[369] Yemen operations in 2012 showed that U.S. drone strikes can integrate with local forces on the ground to achieve an objective. Financially, Chapter III indicated that the United States provided more diplomatic aid to Yemen that targeted improvements to governance after drone strikes started. Prior to Yemen's revolution, the United States had diplomatic goals of improving governance and encouraging the negotiation of a cease-fire with the Houthis.[370] After the revolution, the United States supported the GCC-led transition initiative.[371] The United States also made attempts to improve Yemen's economy and noticeably increased economic aid to Yemen as the drone strikes started. Additionally, USAID appears to have sponsored more projects in provinces where the most drone strikes occur and AQAP traditionally finds its safe haven;[372] this shows a level of coordination between drone strikes and attempts to address underlying problems that allow for safe havens. The information effort in Yemen seemed to increase as drone strikes continued from 2010–2013, and the CSCC specifically focused on targeting AQAP during the RoYG's 2012 counter-offensive.[373] Despite the incremental rise in information as drone strikes occurred, the information effort had to catch up because, unlike the other instruments of national power, no real increase transpired along with

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[369] Zimmerman, "Al-Qaeda in Yemen," 8; The Bureau of Instigative Journalism, "Get the Data: Drone Wars."

[370] Benjamin, "U.S. Counterterrorism Strategy in Yemen."

[371] Department of State, "U.S. Relations with Yemen."

[372] The Bureau of Instigative Journalism, "Get the data: Drone Wars"; United States Agency for International Development, "Yemen—Complex Emergency, 9–30-2012 Fact Sheet #12"; United States Agency for International Development, "Yemen—Complex Emergency, 9–30-2013 Fact Sheet #10."

[373] Fernandez, *State Department's Center For Strategic Counterterrorism Communications*.

drone strikes beginning. Also, Chapter III indicated that the BBG does not focus on Yemen like it does other countries in the Middle East.

Aligned with the 2015 NSS, the United States meets the threat posed by AQAP, but it has not degraded the organization. Although AQAP has been unable to attack the United States like it attempted to do during the early years after its formation, AQAP has increased its attacks inside Yemen against RoYG and foreign targets from 2009–2013. To illustrate, the DOS reported that AQAP conducted hundreds of attacks throughout the country in 2013.[374] This indicates the dependent variable—AQAP's overall size, scope, capabilities, and activity—did not decrease as the independent variable—drone strikes increased. One cannot solely attribute drone strikes as enabling AQAP's increase in attacks within Yemen because an intense period of the drone strikes brought the RoYG success against AQAP in 2012. Therefore, shortages in the intervening variables—the other instruments of national power—occurred.

For instance, diplomatic shortfalls during drone operations ensued in Yemen. Although the data indicates an increase in diplomatic efforts once drone operations began, Yemen briefly collapsing in 2015 suggests Yemen needed more U.S. diplomatic mentorship and support. In all fairness, working with any post-revolution government in the Middle East proved difficult for the United States because most have not lasted very long. For example, Egypt's and Tunisia's elected post-revolution Islamist governments both lost control, one through a coup and the other through a peaceful transition, within a little more than a year.[375] Additionally, conditions in Libya deteriorated to such an extent after its revolution that the DOS suspended operations and evacuated all personnel from the country.[376] In retrospect, U.S. diplomacy in Yemen was not necessarily doomed to fail. In addition to supporting the GCC-driven diplomacy in Yemen after the revolution,

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[374] "Country Report on Terrorism: 2013," United States Department of State, accessed March 18, 2017, 176, https://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/.

[375] Hicham Bou Nassif, "Coup and Nascent Democracies: The Military and Egypt's Failed consolidation," *Democratization* 24, no. 1 (2017): 163, doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2016.1142533; Laura Guazzone, "Ennahda Islamists and the Test of Government in Tunisia," *Italian Journal of International Affairs* 48, no. 4 (2013): 41, doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03932729.2013.847677.

[376] Christopher M. Blanchard, *Libya: Transition and U.S. Policy* (CRS Report No. RL33142) (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service 2016), https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33142.pdf.

the U.S. could have pushed more bi-lateral diplomatic initiatives with President Hadi. For instance, the GCC initiatives included a national dialogue to address all of Yemen's problems with its provinces,[377] but diplomacy should have instead focused on the nearest, biggest, and more recent threat to Yemen, the Houthi. The recent manifestation of the Houthi movement originated in 2004, and RoYG forces conducted six separate conflicts against the Houthis until a ceasefire agreement held in 2010.[378] Addressing the Houthi issue immediately after the 2011 Revolution could have prevented the state from collapsing four years later. Yemen and the short-lived post revolution governments in the Middle East has taught the United States the difficulty in diplomacy after the toppling of a long-time authoritarian ruler. The United States should now realize the need to increase its diplomatic effort following a revolution in not only the Middle East but in any post-revolution country. The increase should include surging a team of experienced DOS subject matter experts to assist the U.S. Ambassador navigate the tenuous political situation.

B.   SOMALIA

From 2011–2015, the use of armed drones against al-Shabaab in Somalia accompanied more assistance in the other instruments of national power, albeit disjointedly at first. To fight al-Shabaab, the United States funded the regional alliance of AMISOM, which began in 2007 and resulted in al-Shabaab turning into an insurgency against the foreign forces.[379] Regardless of AMISOM's presence, al-Shabaab reached its pinnacle as a terrorist organization and insurgency in 2010.[380] In 2011, AMISOM's mission expanded,[381] and the United States began a regular armed drone campaign the

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[377] *Al-Bab*, "Yemen Transition Agreement, 2011."

[378] "Yemen Crisis, Who's Fighting Who," *BBC News*, last modified March 26, 2015, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29319423; "The Conflict in Sa'dah Governorate: Analysis," *IRIN News*, July 24, 2008, http://www.irinnews.org/feature/2008/07/24/conflict-saada-governorate-analysis.

[379] Scahill, *Dirty Wars*, 225.

[380] Ibid., 394, 397.

[381] Lotze, "The Surge to Stabilize," 3, 4.

same year.[382] Chapter IV revealed that U.S. drone operations did not directly coordinate with AMISOM operations from 2011–2013 but that a level of synchronization began in 2014 when drone strikes supported AMISOM ground operations. After the Somali government formed in 2013, Washington boosted its diplomatic support, which steadily increased each subsequent year. Prior to 2013, the United States had used an unfavorable dual-track policy in dealing diplomatically with Somalia.[383] Economically, Chapter IV also indicated that the United States drastically raised assistance in 2011 but increased it even more after 2013. The coordination of economic, military, and information culminated in 2015 after a successful humanitarian project followed an AMISOM operation backed by armed drone strikes. Additionally, the chapter showed that the use of information in Somalia increased each year but only started to target al-Shabaab in 2013.

Despite the independent variable—drone strikes—increasing, the dependent variable—size, scope, capabilities, and activity of al-Shabaab—have fluctuated but currently show a resurgence. Similar to AQAP, the United States met the threat posed by al-Shabaab from 2011–2015, but, regardless of al-Shabaab owning less territory than during its pinnacle in 2010, the enemy adapted. As of this writing, 2015's Operation Juba Corridor remains the last major operation conducted by AMISOM, which puts AMISOM and U.S. goals at risk because al-Shabaab can refit and regroup. U.S. armed drone strikes only slightly escalated in 2016, but the lethality of the strikes drastically increased.[384] Irrespective of drone strikes killing more al-Shabaab fighters than usual in 2016, analysts believe al-Shabaab has gained strength and audacity in 2016 and may be planning a 2017 offensive.[385] This indicates an increase in the dependent variable despite the increases in the independent variable, and, just as in Yemen, shortages in the intervening variables— the other instruments of national power—likely contribute to the increase in the dependent variable. The slow pace of AMISOM continuing offensive operations and the

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[382] The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, "U.S. Strikes in Somalia, 2007-Present."

[383] Shinn, "U.S. 'Dual Track' Policy."

[384] The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, "U.S. Strikes in Somalia: 2007 to Present." On March 5, 2016, U.S. drone strikes, likely combined with other platforms, killed over 150 al-Shabaab militants.

[385] Katherine Zimmerman, Jacqulyn Meyer Kantack, and Colin Lahiff, "U.S. Counterterrorism Objectives in Somalia: Is Mission Failure Likely?" Critical Threats, March (2017): 8, https://www.criticalthreats.org/analysis/us-counterterrorism-objectives-in-somalia-is-mission-failure-likely.

inability to effectively train enough SNA and NSF, which Table 11 illustrated, contributes to al-Shabaab finding the space and time to regroup. The United States could therefore direct its military instrument to improve AMISOM's command and control while concurrently aiming U.S. diplomatic involvement to settle disputes between the AMISOM TCCs to ensure support from TCC governments and cooperation between them.

The United States has made gains through the diplomatic instrument in Somalia, but success requires additional efforts. The overall U.S. objective for Somalia includes the country regaining political and economic stability and an improved humanitarian situation.[386] Despite numerous setbacks, the U.S. strategy slowly makes headway in these objectives. For instance, the U.S. supported the end of the transition government, recognized the formation of a new government in 2013, and backed the 2017 Somali elections.[387] In Somalia, clan caucuses elect members of parliament, and parliament elected a new president in 2017.[388] Notwithstanding observers noting that corruption and bribes pervaded the presidential elections, a smooth transfer of power occurred, marking Somalia's second peaceful transfer since its first direct elections in 1960.[389] The only way for the SNA and NSF to hold ground gained from al-Shabaab will be with logistical, financial, and legal support from a central government. As a result, the United States needs to not only continue but also hasten U.S. efforts to develop the Somali government in order to create a central authority required for an effective army and security force.

C.   INFORMATION TREND

In both countries, one observes an increase in information operations only after the drone campaign commenced, meaning that the information instrument had to catch up

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[386] Department of State, "U.S. Relations with Somalia."

[387] Mark C. Toner, "The United States Congratulates Somalia on the Conclusion of its Electoral Process," United States Department of State, February 8, 2017, https://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2017/02/267498.htm.

[388] Jeffrey Gettlemen, "Election Seen as Milestone of Corruption," *New York Times*, February 7, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/07/world/africa/somalia-election-corruption.html.

[389] Safia Farole, "Somalia's New President Now Faces 3 Big Challenges," *Washington Post*, March 7, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/03/07/somalias-new-president-spent-time-in-buffalo-and-now-faces-these-3-challenges/?utm_term=.4b56292dfc01.

and lacked a plan from the onset. For instance, Chapter IV shows a noticeable increase in information in Somalia in 2013, two years after the first drone strike. In Yemen, Chapter III reveals the information instrument steadily expanded each year from 2009–2013, indicating that not only did the United States find new areas to apply information as the drone campaign continued but also that the United States did not have a comprehensive information plan from the start. Whereas, the United States noticeably and drastically increased military, economic, and diplomatic aid once the drone campaign began, the information efforts indicate a slow, rolling start. The United States' disjointed use of information is an unexpected finding considering all the U.S. strategies in Chapter II emphasized the importance of using information in CT operations. The United States applies information in a defensive fashion in Yemen and Somalia rather than an offensive manner like it employs its other instruments. If the United States already knows it starts from a disadvantaged position regarding information, a drastic increase in information efforts should accompany the commencement of a controversial military tactic such as armed drone operations.

D.   ANALYSIS OF HYPOTHESES

This thesis explored two essential factors: one, has the use of armed drones interacted with other elements of national power, and, two, has the United States achieved its objectives through its CT strategy. As a result, this thesis had four possible hypotheses. The first explanation centered on armed drone operations coinciding with an increase in other instruments of national power. Thus, in this hypothesis, armed drone strikes, in conjunction with other instruments of U.S. national power, account for successful CT operations in a country. The second hypothesis was that other instruments of national power aid armed drone operations but, as a grand strategy, has failed against terrorist organizations in the country. The third explanation finds that not only do armed drone strikes occur irrespective to the other instruments of national power but the United States also fails to achieve its objectives. The final explanation posits that drone strikes do not coordinate with a grand strategy for the weak or failed state; regardless, the sole use of armed drones has proven successful in accomplishing U.S. objectives.

This thesis has shown that armed drones do interact positively with other elements of national power, but the employment of all instruments falls short of meeting the U.S. objectives. Coincidently, the 2015 NSS uses the vague term of "meeting" the threat of AQ and its affiliates, and armed drones offer the United States a tool to always "meet" the threat. Despite armed drone strikes facilitating tangible loses for terrorist organizations in terms of territory, leadership, personnel, and command and control abilities, the terrorist organizations adapt. Therefore, the 2011 NSCT's, 2010 QDDR's, and 2015 NMS's goals of degrading and defeating the terrorist organizations in Yemen and Somalia have not been achieved due to AQAP's and al-Shabaab's resiliency. Consequently, this thesis has also shown that it has not been problems in drone operations that have prevented the United States from achieving its objectives; rather, the ever-tenuous political situations in the host nation and shortfalls in other instruments of national power have thwarted the achievement of U.S. objectives. As a result, this thesis supports the explanation that other instruments of national power aid armed drone operations but, as a grand strategy, has failed against terrorist organizations in the country. Overall, for both cases, the United States did not apply enough diplomatic and information efforts. Research on successful information operations conducted by any nation or subnational entity against terrorist organizations or insurgencies would assist the United States in developing more effective approaches in its information instrument.

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